

School of Theology at Claremont



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# THE DATE BOY OF BAGHDAD

A large, stylized tree illustration in gold. The tree has a long, slender trunk that splits into two main branches at the top, which then curve outwards to form a wide, open canopy. The branches are adorned with small, dark, heart-shaped leaves. The entire tree is framed by a decorative border that follows its outline.

J. COCKER



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THE DATE BOY OF BAGHDAD

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*Children*

**THE  
DATE BOY OF BAGHDAD**  
**THIRTY-FIVE STORY TALKS TO  
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**BY  
REV. J. COCKER**

Formerly Editor of the  
'New Zealand Primitive Methodist,' 'New Zealand Vanguard'  
Associate Editor of the  
'New Zealand Methodist Times'  
and Author of 'Blossomby Idylls,' etc.

**WITH FOREWORD BY**  
**THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT STOUT**  
P.C., K.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D., Chief Justice of New Zealand



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I GLADLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

LEONARD M. ISITT, M.P.

WHO FOR MANY YEARS HAS BRAVELY  
AND ABLY LED THE PROHIBITION PARTY  
IN NEW ZEALAND.

BY HIS CHRISTIAN COURAGE, BURNING  
ENTHUSIASM, AND THE USE OF HIS GIFTS  
AS AN ORATOR HE HAS GREATLY ADVANCED  
THE CAUSE OF PROHIBITION IN THE  
DOMINION



CHIEF JUSTICE'S CHAMBERS  
WELLINGTON

THE Rev. James Cocker has been known for many years throughout New Zealand as an able, sincere, and earnest Methodist minister, who has done great social work for our Dominion. Though there may be many who do not see eye to eye with him in his religious creed, and who may object to some passages in his *Date Boy of Baghdad*, which proclaims his unswerving faith in the Christian doctrines, yet no one can fail to appreciate his book. Let us read it not to find fault with a stray sentence here and there which emphasises his faith, but as a book of ethical culture. If we do so we will appreciate his effort in moral training and wish to see his book widely circulated.

If there is one lesson the Great War should teach us more than another, surely it is this: that moral training is the most important part of education, and that morality must be, as it is, the basis of any true civilisation. It is the want of morality that destroys states, that creates wars, that prevents progress, and delays the coming of that era of the brotherhood and love for which prophets and poets have longed and foretold. If only the moral lessons given in this book were absorbed and acted upon by our youths, we could look with hope and confidence to the future of our



race and of humanity, for the world would have a purer social life and nobler citizens.

The way in which the ethical lessons are enforced by historical illustrations and apt anecdotes makes the book attractive as a story book. Indeed, "grown-ups" would be none the worse for perusing its pages. I can cordially commend it to all parents, guardians, and youths, and hope it may have a wide circulation.

ROBERT STOUT

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE story talks in this volume were first printed in the *New Zealand Methodist Times*. They now appear in a more permanent form, accompanied by a sincere wish that they may be helpful in forming noble ideals in the minds of the young people who read the book. Though differing from Sir Robert Stout in his religious views, I have for many years admired him as a lover of humanity and an earnest worker for the social and moral uplift of his fellow men—hence my appreciation of the Foreword he has written. I wish to acknowledge the services of my friend, the Rev. Samuel Horton, in revising the proof sheets of *The Date Boy of Baghdad*.

MASTERTON

NEW ZEALAND, *July* 1925



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## I

### THE DATE BOY OF BAGHDAD

“Be content with such things as ye have.”—

HEBREWS xiii. 5.

THE history of Baghdad, the wonderful city on the banks of the Tigris, dates back to the year 763 A.D., when it was founded. It grew in power until it was the Queen City of the East, with a population of two million people, though it has now only 145,000. It was the centre of trade and the seat of culture. It had wonderful palaces, which were famed for their beauty. There were many public buildings and thousands of streets, and some scores of canals ran through the city. There are many wonderful stories told in connection with the ancient city. It occupies a prominent place in Eastern lore and legends. For some months in the year the weather is fearfully hot, and men walk the street selling fruit.

I want to tell you the story of Almansor, the date boy of Baghdad. He lived with his old father, and they both sold dates in the streets of the city. One day the father said to his son :

“ I have been a king and lived in great splendour, and I could go back again to live in a palace, but I am happier as a seller of dates.”

“ And could I be a king if I wished ? ” asked his son.

“ Yes,” replied the father ; “ I will put my charm on your finger and you can become any person you see,” and he put a curiously designed ring upon his son’s finger.

Almansor went into the streets and sold his dates, but he thought, “ If I can be somebody else, why should I remain a poor date seller ? ” While he was thus thinking, negro slaves began to drive back the crowd, for the great Prince Ahmet was coming. Almansor looked with envious eyes at the young man as he sat richly dressed on his beautiful horse and smiling at the people who bowed before him.

“ I wish I was the Prince ! ” sighed Almansor to himself. In a moment he was sitting on the horse as Prince Ahmet, but he did not feel happy ; he felt sick in his body and depressed in his spirits, and was feeling the effects of an idle life of luxury. That morning he had discovered that a man whom he thought was his truest friend had been slandering and robbing him. He had found that, while he was rich and powerful and he had many flatterers, he had not one true friend whom he could trust.



Speaking to a goldsmith in the bazaar, he said, "How much would it take to buy a true friend?"

"Most noble Prince," replied the goldsmith, "gold cannot buy friends."

"Have you a friend you could trust with your life?" asked the Prince.

"Yes, one," said the goldsmith.

"I wish I were you!" said the Prince.

In a moment Almansor found himself a happy, grey-haired old man watching the Prince ride away.

In a little while Almansor was tired of being an old man, even if he had one true friend.

One day he saw a poor young beggar eyeing some figs in a shop. He looked so young, clean, and happy that Almansor said, "I wish I could be that boy." In a moment he was the beggar boy. A fig merchant sent him with a box of figs to the Caliph.

When Almansor saw him in all his splendour, he wished to be him, and at once he was the Caliph. Even then he did not feel happy. His Grand Vizier was plotting against him, and he was afraid of being murdered.

While he sat on his horse and smiled at the crowd, every movement filled him with fear lest it should be an assassin attempting to take away his life. He saw a youth with a smiling face selling dates at the palace gates. "Oh," he

said, "I wish I were that poor, but happy boy selling dates, and so be free from the worry of being Caliph!" At once Almansor found himself selling dates at the palace gates just as he had done in the past, poor but happy.

"Well," he said, "if that is being someone else, I shall be pleased to remain just what I am, a poor, but honest and happy date pedlar. I shall have less worry than being either Prince or Caliph." He gave the ring back to his father, who said, "Now I am going to make one wish before I burn the ring. May we each have a happy life." He then threw the ring into the fire.

The next morning Almansor went out with a basket of dates on his shoulder, a smile on his face and singing a song. His wish was being granted. Now, from this old story of Almansor, the date boy of Baghdad, we learn—

*I. The Folly of being Envious.*—We look at people who are occupying high positions and who possess wealth and live amid luxurious surroundings, and we think we should be so much happier were we in their place. Yet such persons may not be any happier than their poorer neighbours. They would, perhaps, be willing to be poor if they could be healthy and happy. In the Song of Solomon we read: "Comfort me with apples." These are the words of a princess who lived in a palace, feasted in a banqueting hall, was gaily

attired and had attendants to wait upon her ; but in her early days she was a peasant and dwelt in a cottage. She walked in the orchard and enjoyed the apples, and now as a princess she wishes she was back at the cottage and could go into the orchard and enjoy herself as in the past. She knew that she was happier as a peasant than she was as a princess. Position does not secure happiness.

Sometimes persons are envied because of their good looks. Beauty is one of God's gifts, and those who possess it should not be proud and vain. A person may be very plain or even have an ugly face, and yet they may have a beautiful character, and this is better than having a beautiful face and a bad character. David's wicked and rebellious son Absalom was beautiful in appearance, but he had a very wicked heart. "Truth in the inward parts" will give beauty to character. Sometimes we are inclined to be envious of those who are preferred before us. Cain was jealous of Abel because his offering was preferred before his, so that jealousy was the cause of the first murder.

Aaron and Miriam were jealous of Moses, and for her jealousy God punished Miriam by making her a leper and causing her to wander outside the camp of the Israelites. When she was penitent she was healed of her leprosy. It was jealousy

which caused Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt. When Saul heard the people singing "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands," he was jealous of David because he was so popular, and he tried to kill him.

Many men when they have become popular have suffered because of the jealousy of others. After Columbus had discovered America he returned to the Spanish Court, but the nobles were jealous of him, and so greatly depreciated all that he had done that it almost broke the heart of the great discoverer. Jealousy is almost always unjust. If persons have toiled and struggled to gain positions, do not envy them, but give them cheers. If your companions do better in their examinations than you, remember that envying them will not help you. Perhaps they worked harder than you. Try and do better in the next examination.

*II. It is Better to Work than Wish.*—Idle wishing is useless. To sit at the foot of the hill and wish you were at the top will not get you there. You will have to climb its sides. Wishing to be a scholar will not make you one. You will have to study hard for years. If you intend to be a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or learn a trade, simply wishing will not do it. You must work hard. Very little comes to boys or girls who only wish. Wishing and working must go together.

*III. Foolish Discontentment is a Sin.*—There is a divine discontentment which is the foundation of all human progress. It keeps the world marching on. It makes the reformer strike for freedom, the social worker to struggle for a better state of things, and discontent makes the sinner seek to become a saint. If a man is dissatisfied with his sinful state and wishes to be a good man, that is a commendable dissatisfaction. He will be better for it. But to be always grumbling and never contented is wrong. Growling dogs are always disliked, and growling people are shunned. Better sing than grumble; be sweet and not sour. Be happy and contented with what you have.

## II

### THE CHINESE MAGISTRATE AND HIS FATHERS

“As I have done, so God hath requited me.”—  
JUDGES i. 7.

A RICH Chinaman was very sick, and a poor neighbour showed much sympathy with him in his sickness. Before the rich man died, he gave a large and beautiful jar to his friend, and said : “ Whatever you place in this jar will be multiplied many times, so shall you be rewarded for your kindness to me in my sickness.”

The poor man took the jar home, and its fame soon spread. Whatever he put into it was multiplied so that he was able to help his poor neighbours.

A wicked and greedy Magistrate heard about the wonderful jar, and said to himself, “ I will get that jar for my own use.” He summoned the owner to appear before him and state how he got possession of the jar. He heard his story, and he said, “ I am not satisfied that what you say is true. I will take time to think over the matter. In the meantime I shall keep the jar at my house.”

He profited by the labours of the jar, but the friends of the owner said, "This is not right. The Magistrate should give the man his jar." They appealed to the Magistrate, but he refused to listen to them.

They then said, "We will appeal to his father." Now, in China a man may be seventy years of age, but if his father is alive he has to obey his orders as though he was only ten. When the father spoke to his son about the jar, he told many lies, but the old man was not deceived, and he decided to look for the jar himself. He went blundering round a dark room in search of the jar, and he fell into it. He cried to his son to pull him out. The son did so, but when he pulled out one father there was another in the jar. He kept on pulling out one father after another until the room was full of fathers, and then he filled the yard with fathers, and seated about half a dozen more on a stone fence, before the jar would cease producing fathers. The son dare not leave one father in the jar, because it would have been equal to murder.

Now the Magistrate had, according to the law, to support all the dozens of fathers he pulled out of the jar. It took all his wealth, and he became a poor man, because of the cost of keeping the fathers who came out of the jar. He had stolen the jar, so out of it was he punished for his theft.



The owner got his jar. Now, I think the Chinese in this old story of the grasping, greedy magistrate who overreached himself wished to show :

*I. A Man is sometimes Punished by being Paid back in his own Coin.*—You have heard how the Australian natives throw a peculiarly shaped stick into the air, and after it has travelled some distance it returns back to the man who has thrown it, and if he is not alert it may hit him on the head. Hence he watches for the return of the “boomerang.” Sometimes he is hit by the stick he has thrown.

The Psalmist declares that men shall fall into the pit they have dug for others' reception. The Bible gives us many illustrations of this. Haman was hanged on the gallows which he had erected, intending to hang Mordecai. Gehazi lied to Naaman the Syrian, and tried to deceive Elisha his master, and as a punishment the leprosy of Naaman came upon Gehazi and he became a leper “as white as snow.” Jacob covered himself with a hairy skin and deceived Isaac his blind father.

Years later, when he believed he was marrying Rachel, whose features were hidden beneath the wedding veil, he discovered that Laban his father-in-law had deceived him, and he had been married to Leah. Jacob deceived his father by the use of a hairy skin, and his father-in-law

deceived him by the use of a veil. Adoni-bezek captured seventy chiefs, and he cut off their thumbs and big toes and made them sit at his table, where he could gloat over them as his maimed prisoners. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land they captured Adoni-bezek and cut off his thumbs and big toes, and he said, "The punishment is just. I have been treated in the same manner that I have treated others."

Daniel's enemies cast him into the lion's den, but God preserved him, and later his enemies were cast into the same den and were eaten by the lions which had refused to eat Daniel. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were preserved alive in the fiery furnace into which they had been cast, but their enemies were burnt to death in the very furnace into which they had previously cast the three young Hebrews. Jacob deceived his father, and in later years his own sons deceived him.

Boys and girls, you will reap what you sow. If you break Nature's law, she will strike you back again. The drunkard discovers this to his sorrow, so does the prodigal who lives a wicked life.

A man's sin comes back upon him. Ahab and Jezebel, when they planned for the murder of Naboth that they might possess his vineyard, forgot that God was looking on, but the day

came when Elijah met the guilty king and pronounced judgment upon him. In the day when judgment came upon Ahab's house, the corpse of his eldest son was thrown over the wall into Naboth's vineyard. Yes, God is looking on. Sin is marked down in God's book of records. There is not only a general, but also a particular Providence.

Ancient Grecian literature is full of illustrations of men being paid back in their own coin. It is said that Timerus killed persons by dashing his hard head against theirs, but Hercules killed him by breaking his skull. We are also told that Diomedes taught his horses to feed on the flesh and blood of men, and one day he was eaten by his own horses.

You have read how Ralph the Rover took down the bell from the Inchcape Rock so that captains of ships were no longer warned of their danger. Yet one year later his ship was wrecked upon the same rock, and he lost his ship and his life as a righteous punishment. These things remind us that God sits on heaven's throne, and still rules among men. Never forget that God is looking on.

*II. When a Man does Good, he is sometimes rewarded in his own Coin.*—A man who sows smile seed will reap some of the crop. The man who makes others laugh will find that they in turn will

bring pleasure into his life. A man who helps another in time of need will find that when troubles come upon him the people he helped will probably stretch out a hand and help him. Men reap what they sow. A man who gives the cup of cold water shall in no wise lose his reward. With what measure we mete it shall be measured to us again. Bread cast upon the waters shall be found again after many days. The Bible tells us that if we show hospitality to strangers we may be entertaining angels unawares. Do good and you will be rewarded by feeling happier because you have done good to someone else.

Sow flowers, and flowers will blossom  
 Around you wherever you go.  
 Sow weeds and of weeds reap the harvest ;  
 You'll reap whatsoever you sow.

Sow blessings, and blessings will ripen ;  
 Sow hatred, and hatred will grow ;  
 Sow mercy, and reap sweet compassion ;  
 You'll reap whatever you sow.

### III

## THE PRAYING MANTIS: OR, BE WHAT YOU SEEM TO BE

“Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light.”—  
2 COR. xi. 14.

HAVE you read of the “Praying Mantis,” that wonderful insect which reclines hidden among the foliage of the trees? He raises the long forepart of his body, and he lifts his forelegs until they are before his head, he then clasps them together as though he were at prayer. Now his long legs are simply graspers with which he seizes his living prey. As soon as an unsuspecting insect draws near, he shoots out one of his forelegs and grasps it, he then crunches it up in his mouth, and there is one insect less in the world. The mantis then puts his hands before his head again and is praying once more. What a cheat he is! While he is in the attitude of prayer, he is on the look-out to kill some innocent insect. He is not what he seems to be. He is a hypocrite. While he seems to be praying he is really preying.

*I. We should always be what we appear to be.—*

Be sincere, which means that we should be in reality what we are in appearance. We should not pretend to be somebody or something we are not. Of course, there are actors who earn their living by assuming for the time being that they are some other characters, but they do not deceive those who see them acting, because the people know they are acting for the pleasure of the onlooker. A man who appears to be something he is not is a deceiver and a hypocrite. When people discover that they have been deceived by a person's insincerity, they are suspicious of the person the next time they have dealings with them. In the gardens at Chatsworth, the Palace of the Peak, there is a tree known as the weeping willow. It is made of copper and looks like an ordinary tree, but when the unsuspecting visitor has walked under its branches someone will go behind a rock and turn on a tap. Water gushes out from the branches and leaves of the tree, and the curious visitor gets drenched unless he runs away very quick. The tree is a deception, and the same person is not "taken in" a second time. Once drenched he is not caught again.

We need to be constantly on the look-out lest we be deceived by appearances. The Bible tells us that our great enemy, the devil, sometimes tempts man as an angel of light. When he

comes as a roaring lion we are prepared for him, but when he comes as an angel of light we are in danger of being deceived by him. Judas was used by the devil, and he kissed Jesus and then went out and betrayed Him. He was a friend to Jesus to His face, but an enemy behind His back.

Never be a hypocrite, and smile in the face of your friend and betray him in his absence. There is an ancient legend which says that a beautiful lady was sent to Alexander the Great from a conquered province. She was very beautiful, and her breath was like the fragrance from the sweetest flowers ; but she had lived all her life amid poison, and her body was full of it. When she placed flowers upon her breast they withered. Insects died when they came in contact with her breath, and it is said that birds which entered her room fell dead. Now this is only a fanciful story, but it illustrates the fact that a person may have a beautiful face and in outward appearance may be attractive, but they may have a bad character and a bad influence. They may carry a moral poison with them and may contaminate others. Like Satan, they are disguised as angels of light.

*II. Deceivers always imitate the Best.*—Counterfeiters copy the best coins. Sometimes we are warned in the columns of the newspapers against



counterfeit sovereigns, half-sovereigns, and bank notes, which are in circulation, so those who appear to be what they are not usually pretend to be better than they are. They hope to gain something by their deceit, but when discovered they are punished.

There was possibly never a greater impostor in the history of England than Perkin Warbeck, the son of a Jew broker of Antwerp, a young man of great personal beauty and who had a very "taking way" with him. By his insinuating manner he induced thousands to believe that he was the Duke of York, and for five years he fought to gain the crown of England. At last he was captured, proved to be a fraud, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment as a punishment for his deception. Men have a contempt for a deceiver, and when he is caught and punished people say, "Serve him right." If a man is caught cheating at cards he is classed as dishonourable and expelled from his club, and men refuse to play with him. A deceiver is always uneasy; his conscience pricks him, and he is constantly in fear of being found out. This is part of an insincere person's punishment.

General Grant, during the American War, was marching in Missouri. One of his lieutenants obtained refreshments at a house for himself and friends by pretending to be General

Grant and his staff. General Grant called at the same house a little later and asked for refreshments. He was told in a very curt manner that he could not have anything, as General Grant and his staff had just been and eaten up all the food except a pumpkin pie. The General paid two shillings for the pie, and told the lady of the house to keep it until he sent for it. He rode forward, halted the army, parade was formed, and the following order given:—  
“Lieutenant Wickfield, having called at a house and obtained refreshments by deceiving the people, and as he has eaten everything in Mrs Selvidge’s house but one pumpkin pie, he is ordered to return with 100 cavalry, and in their presence eat the whole of the pumpkin pie.” And so before one hundred silent soldiers the lieutenant had to eat the big pie. So did General Grant punish deception and at the same time teach his soldiers to be honest and sincere.

Always be genuine. Don’t attempt to deceive. In your games play straight. One day I was watching a cricket match, when one of the fielders ran after a ball and quickly picked it up and then pretended that he could not find it, hoping that the batsmen would run again, then he would quickly throw the ball to the wicket-keeper, and perhaps put the batsman out. The onlookers shouted, “Whitechapel!

Whitechapel ! ” They felt it was not cricket ; it was not playing the game. Be manly, be straight, be sincere, and, above all, never practise badness under a cover of goodness. Never use religion as a cloak for wickedness. Do not serve the devil in the armour of Jesus Christ, but be genuine soldiers of His.

## IV

### THE MAN WITH AN EVIL EYE

“Him that hath an evil eye.”—PROVERBS xxiii. 6.

SOME years ago I was riding in a carriage while on a journey between Jerusalem and Jericho, when I noticed that a number of coloured ribbons were tied to a horse's mane. They were not intended to make the horse look more attractive, like some of the horses we see in our streets, or at an agricultural show. I asked the driver why they were tied on the horse, and he said, “Those ribbons are to protect the horse against the man with an evil eye. One day when I had forgotten to tie on the charms I saw a man look at my horse, and I felt sure he had an evil eye. That night the horse died. If I had tied on the ribbons before going for the drive, the horse would not have died.”

Of course, that was a foolish superstition, and we are inclined to laugh at the Arab driver, but I wonder if we have any foolish ideas concerning “charms” and “luck.” When I was a boy we used to play the game of “Tommy

Touchwood," in which, according to the rule of the game, the players were safe as long as they touched wood. During the Great War we heard much about charms and luck. Hundreds of thousands of charms, known as "Tommy Touchwood," were sold in England, and many soldiers wore them for luck. Some of the men who were not wounded attributed their safety to having worn a charm. Some persons wear rings on their fingers, carry stones in their pockets, or nail horse-shoes over their doors, to give them luck. This is just as foolish as the conduct of the Arab driver in tying ribbons on his horse's mane to protect it from being injured by the man who looked at it with an evil eye.

*I. The Eye is one of the most Wonderful Parts of the Human Body.*—It is a proof of the Creator's wisdom who made man. It is like a telescope and looks at objects many miles away. It is also like a microscope, for it can most closely examine the smallest object. What pleasure comes to us through our eyes. We look at beautiful scenes or pictures, and we are pleasantly thrilled by what we see. We read and gain knowledge through the use of our eyes. In the same way we recognise our friends. Much of the pleasure of life comes to us through our eyes. They enable us to see our way about, and they can be turned in various directions by

the use of muscles. But both eyes turn in the same direction at the same time. You cannot look at an object in one direction with one eye and in another direction with the other eye. If we could, we should see double, and that would be most bewildering. Think how well protected the eyes are. The eyelashes prevent the perspiration from running into them, and if a cloud of dust is approaching, the eyelids drop to cover them. If specks of dust should enter them, then tears are produced, which wash the eyes, and in this way the eye instinctively tries to remove the objectionable intruders. Do not injure your eyes by any foolish or bad habits. Many persons suffer from bad eyesight through smoking tobacco and drinking intoxicating liquor.

There are different kinds of eyes. Some are dark, others grey, blue or brown. There are bright laughing eyes ; glad eyes, which seem to say that the person is very happy. There are gloomy eyes, which tell us that the owner is unhappy. There are talking eyes. You can tell by the look in the eyes of your father or mother whether they are pleased or displeased with you. Jesus looked at Peter, and the great big disciple went out and wept bitterly. The Master had reproved Peter with a look. There are angry eyes, when by the look in them

we show people that we are displeased. There are jealous eyes, which are sometimes spoken of as "green eyes." It is said that Saul "eyed" David. He looked at him with jealous eyes. There are wicked eyes that look to envy and to covet. A thief has always a wicked eye. He looks, then he longs, and then he takes. Beware where you look and how you look. Control your eyes.

*II. Be sure and Use your Eyes.*—It is possible to look with our eyes and yet not really see. You sometimes hear people say, "Oh yes, I saw that object, but I did not take much notice of it." Or perhaps a person is describing something they have seen, and another person says, "Well, when I looked at it I did not see anything in it." Look at the beautiful things in the world. It is a great pity to be surrounded by beauty and yet not see it. Of many boys and girls it may be said that they have eyes, but they see not. Look at the stars and see how beautiful they are. Look at the flowers and see their loveliness. Linnæus was a great naturalist, and one day after looking at some mountain grasses, he fell on his knees, and with tears of joy running down his cheeks, he thanked God for their loveliness. John Ruskin said that when he saw the great mountains he felt that he wanted to pray.

One day I was standing in a lovely, large garden, where there was a wonderful display of flowers. I told a friend who was with me how much I enjoyed the beautiful scene, and he replied: "I don't see anything in growing flowers; I would rather see it growing clover for the cattle. The only flowers I like are cauliflowers." He would have been as happy in a barren wilderness as in a beautiful paradise. He was the poorer because he could not appreciate that which was beautiful in nature.

The soul has eyes. What wonderful things Helen Keller has seen through the eyes of her soul! Dr Matheson was a blind preacher, but in his books and songs he has told us what he saw with his soul's eyes. Milton, the great poet, was blind when he wrote some of his poems, but he looked upon great realms of beauty through his soul's eyes. You will get your best visions through the eyes of your soul. Lot looked at the Jordan valley and decided that it was a lovely place in which to make a home, but when he and his family had to leave because of the punishment that came upon his neighbours for their sins, he realised that he had only looked on the surface and not with the eyes of his soul. Boys, if you look before you settle you may be saved from much trouble. Don't settle down to work in a brewery, a public-house bar, or as a



jockey, or you will probably suffer in your character.

*III. Beware at What you Look.*—There are some colours which are very trying to the eyes. They are too dazzling and the eye suffers if it looks too long upon them. Morally there are some things at which it is not good for us to look. Some pictures suggest impure thoughts, and I would warn you against looking at them, for by so doing you will sully your soul. In some countries a censor has been appointed whose duty it is to examine all picture films before they are shown to the public, and so day by day he is weeding out pictures which are morally injurious for the human eye to look upon. Then beware of reading books and magazines which are not clean. By reading bad literature you may suffer morally for years.

Remember, if we trust in God, that His loving, protecting eye is upon us. At the battle-front during the Great War huge captive balloons were floating in the air. These contained men with field glasses, who constantly watched the enemy, and by telephone reported to men upon the ground any movement they observed. They were the eyes of the army, watching, watching. Our Father in Heaven is ever looking upon us. Watching over us, and His eyes are never closed. He will guide us with His eye.

## V

### THE FOOLISH MEN OF GOTHAM

“The doers of the work.”—2 KINGS xxii. 5.

“I must work.”—JOHN ix. 4.

GOTHAM, as the residence of foolish people, exists only in the imagination. In ancient days Phrygia in Asia, Abdera in Thrace, and in Greece Bœotea, have been the fabled home of fools. Some persons say that Gotham was in Essex, others that it was in Lincolnshire, but in most of the English counties there have been villages which have been charged with being the home of foolish people.

Often this reputation for foolishness is based upon some story which has become associated with a particular village. The inhabitants of one of these villages, on seeing a cow with its head through the bars of a gate, are said to have sawed the cow's head off instead of sawing the gate bars; the inhabitants of another, noticing that it was always summer when the cuckoo arrived, are credited with having tried to build a tower tall enough to keep the cuckoo in all the year, so that it would always be

summer ; the village folk of a third are reputed to have trusted to the clergyman to place a white covering over the village cross to remind the people that it was Sunday, but the minister falling sick they were three weeks without a Sunday. Such are some of the actions of the fabled Gothamites.

The story of the twelve foolish men of Gotham is as follows :—One day they decided to go fishing. When they arrived at the stream which was some distance from the town, some of the fishers waded into the water and some fished from the banks. When they were returning home one said : “ We have been very venture-some in wading to-day, I hope that no one who came has got drowned.” “ Well,” said another, “ twelve of us came fishing, let us count and see that we are all here.” The first man counted eleven, and then they all counted, each making their number to be eleven. “ Well,” they said. “ One of us must be drowned.”

So they went back to the brook where they had been fishing, and looked for the one drowned, but found him not. Then did they weep with a great lamentation. A soldier came by and inquired why they were so sorrowful. They told him, and they said : “ We will give you all the money we have if you will find us the twelfth

man." Then did he begin to count, and as he counted he hit each man so hard that each groaned, and when he came to the last man, he gave him the hardest blow of all, and said, "Here is the twelfth man." "God bless you," said the twelve men, "for you have found our neighbour who was lost." Such is the story of the foolish men who thought they had lost one of their number because each man had left himself out of the count.

*I. Boys and Girls, you should always Count yourself one.*—Boys may think too much or too little of themselves. We don't like to see the boy who is conceited, and is always using a great big capital "I," and who gives you the impression that he has a swelled head. That is the kind of boy we don't like. Neither do we like the boy who does not think enough of himself, and who always seems as though he wants to beg pardon for being born, and would like to apologise for being alive. Every boy has a right to be alive and enjoy the natural rights of life. The son or daughter of the poorest parents has as much right to live as the son of the King. You have a right to be here. The great God has given you your being and placed you here, and you have a divine right to live. No human being has power to deny you that right. You have also the right

to take your part in the life of the community. God did not make you to be a useless nobody, but He intended you to be a useful somebody. There is a place for you; find it and fill it. Let your light shine. Don't put a snuffer on it. Your light is necessary as a part of the whole.

*II. It is Wrong to leave Yourself out of the Count.*—You will soon be men and women and you must learn to count yourself in all matters affecting the community. In New Zealand all men and women over twenty-one years of age who are outside a gaol or lunatic asylum have the franchise, and are able to vote in the election of members of Parliament, Mayors, councillors, members of the Licensing Bench, and also for the continuance or prohibition of the liquor traffic. You must do your share. Do not leave all the public work to be done by others. Do not be a shirker. Those who are prepared to reap the benefit of the public labours of others should be prepared to do their share of public work. You are part of the State and you must take your share of responsibility. Some good people say, "We are Christians, and our citizenship is in heaven, and we must keep ourselves separate from worldly elections and politics. There will be no politics in heaven. We must not get entangled in these things."

I believe in both an earthly and a heavenly citizenship. Because I am a citizen of Christ's kingdom I should be all the better citizen of the British Empire. We have many things on earth the like of which there will not be in heaven. There will be no ships in heaven, for there will be "no more sea" there. Probably there will not be any motor-cars or trams or trains, but that does not mean that it is wrong to ride in them here. I don't think there will be any printing press, or newspapers or books in heaven, but it is right for us to have them here. There will be no elections in heaven, we shall be thoroughly satisfied with its righteous and perfect form of government, but that is no reason why we should not seek to purify politics here. If I am prepared to use the roads I should be prepared to be a member of the Road Board. If I want good laws, I should help to elect good law-makers. If I believe the liquor traffic to be a gigantic evil I should use my power to vote it out.

I believe the Apostle Paul would have done all this, for he said, "I am a citizen of no mean city," and I am sure he would have used his powers as a citizen in trying to improve the spiritual and moral state of the people. Boys, count yourself in. Why should you not be city or town councillors, mayors or members of

Parliament, and serve God and your country in those positions. Aim to count one in the civic life of the land.

In the great battle of life count yourself as one who will do his duty. Qualify yourself to occupy a position in the first rank. Do not push yourself there, but fit yourself for it and you will probably get there. It is your duty to qualify yourself to be a leader. When you are ready the position will open for you. Some men are more anxious to secure a leading position in the community than they are to qualify themselves for it. Others would like to be foreman or manager of a business when they have never qualified themselves for the position. When people think you are "just the man" for a given position, it means that you have qualified yourself to occupy it. Count yourself one in Church work. So many people are prepared to trust to others—to count the others but leave themselves out. Someone else can do the singing, speaking, teaching, praying, giving and working, but they must not be expected to do anything. There are many shirkers within the Church. Boys and girls, get into the firing line of the Church and be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Be neither a deserter nor a shirker.

## VI

### THE ROAD-MAKER WHO WAS A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

“A poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.”—ECCLES. ix. 15.

SOON after I arrived in New Zealand, many years ago, I was walking with another minister down the street of one of our towns, when he said : “Here is our member of Parliament; I will introduce you to him.”

I looked round, expecting to see a well-dressed gentleman, but my friend stopped near a man who was making a footpath. He was dressed in well-worn fustian; he had his coat off and his shirt sleeves turned up. His hands were dirty, several of his fingers had sticking plaster on them, and looked as though they had been bruised. He was making a new road.

After the introduction was over he said : “People cannot get along very well without roads, so when I am not doing my duty in the House of Representatives, I spend my time mending and making roads.”

My feelings received quite a shock. A member



of Parliament working as an ordinary road-maker ! I had just arrived from England, and though I professed to be a Liberal in politics, I had an old-fashioned idea that members of Parliament belonged to the upper class, and were either employers of labour, owners of property, or men of title.

Before I had left England a few working men had been sent to Parliament and were supported by the Unions they represented, but as members of Parliament were not paid for their services by the nation at that time, only men of wealth and leisure could afford to enter the House of Commons. Government was left almost entirely to the wealthy class.

Since then many Labour members have entered Parliament, and they have been road-makers. Perhaps some boy who is the son of a working man may read this address. There is no reason why you should not serve God and your country in Parliament. Only be sure and qualify yourself to be a legislator. Have ideals, and either mend old roads or make new ones.

*I. Road-making is a very necessary Occupation.*—Road-makers and road-menders increase our comfort. Roads very soon have holes worn in them, and if they are not mended they become dangerous, and drivers of motor-cars and other vehicles complain. Farmer Dale, who is chair-

man of a Road Board, one day said to me: "A good road-maker is a public benefactor." That is true.

Don't despise the road-mender. His work is very humble and commonplace, but very necessary. Many persons who rush over the good roads he makes never give a thought to the road-maker, though they are reaping the benefit of his work. The motorists complain when the roads are in bad repair. It is then that they cry out for the road-mender.

You should remember that the world is always in need of road-makers and road-menders. There would be no progress without them. They explore the earth's surface and make new discoveries and inventions.

If you wish to be a road-maker you should read the lives of famous men who have made or mended roads. Lord Kelvin, for instance, was a great road-maker. When a boy he spent his time in finding answers to mathematical problems. He would get out of bed, light the gas, sit on the floor, and work out a problem on his slate. In later years he devised mathematical problems of his own. He continued his varied studies until he became one of the world's greatest inventors. It was very largely through his work that we received the ocean cable, so that telegrams could be sent round the world.

He improved the mariner's compass, and made a machine for sounding the depth of the sea from the deck of a vessel travelling at many miles an hour. He invented another machine which made it possible in a few hours to predict the tides for a whole year. He was a great road-maker.

## *II. Road-making is Hard and Dangerous Work.*

—It is tiring and perspiring work, and makes the worker's back ache. Perhaps trees have to be cut down and their roots pulled up, or rocks blasted. Sometimes when new roads are made in new countries, there are wild beasts which threaten the lives of the road-makers. It is easier to walk on an old road than make a new one.

You will find it very hard work making new roads in the social world in opposition to the customs of the day. Look how hard it has been for the women who have tried to make new roads. The first women who tried to become lady doctors found the road very rough, and it took them many years to make a road into the medical profession. Lady authors found the way into the literary world very hard.

I have read that Miss Evans wrote under the assumed name of "George Eliot," because people were more inclined to buy books written by men than those produced by lady authors.

The last road the women of England tried to make was named "Women's Franchise," and for years they vainly fought to secure the right to vote at the election of members of Parliament. It was hard work making that new road, but the war came, and the women of England were so patriotic and did such splendid work in helping to win it, that the House of Commons gave them both the franchise and the right to a seat in Parliament. Lady Astor was the first lady member of the House of Commons, and she was a road-maker.

*III. All Brave-hearted Reformers are Road-makers.*—Martyrs who have died for the truth were road-makers. When Latimer said to Ridley, "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out," he felt that they were making a new road on which thousands of people would travel, and his prophecy has been fulfilled. Thousands of men and women have shed their blood while making roads. They have been burned, hanged or shot because they have tried to make new paths. The world has cruelly treated its road-makers. Ignorant people, whose eyes are blinded by custom and prejudice, often oppose men who try to make new roads. If you read the lives of great reformers you will find that in almost every case men said, "We don't want a

new road ; we are content to jog along on the old one." They threw stones at the new road-makers.

Road-makers are light-bearers. They carry light along the roads they make.

Missionaries are road-makers. Livingstone, Moffat, Morrison, Carey, Chalmers, Hudson Taylor, Mary Slessor, and hundreds of other men and women who took the Gospel light to heathen lands were path-makers. They were the pioneers of civilisation, and others who have followed them ought to take off their hats to the memory of the brave new road-makers.

The great leaders of the Church have been road-makers. John Wesley, by his teaching and open-air preaching ; General Booth, who founded the Salvation Army ; Robert Raikes, the leader in Sunday School work ; George Muller and Dr Barnardo, who started agencies for the rescuing of destitute boys and girls, were men who made new roads.

Fighters for freedom have been road-makers. For centuries the road of freedom has been in the making. It is a long road, and men in different ages have tried to extend it.

Young people, you can become road-makers. All the new roads have not been made, and some of the old roads require mending. Strong, brave-hearted men and women are required.

Get on to the road of progress and clear it of obstacles. In this way you may serve God and humanity. Above all, walk in the footsteps of Jesus, who was the great spiritual road-maker.

## VII

### THE MEN WHO GAVE UP THE KEYS TO THE ENEMY

“ Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”—JAMES iv. 7.

THERE was a time when the English sovereigns hoped to win the crown of France, but, failing to obtain that, they tried to regain the possessions their forefathers had owned as French nobles. As the possession of Calais would give the British an entrance into France, they were very anxious to gain possession of this fortress.

In the year 1346 King Edward the Third of England besieged Calais. For a whole year his victorious army encamped before the city. After twelve months had passed, one day the Governor made signs from the battlement that he wished to parley with the enemy. He asked that the English King would allow the soldiers and inhabitants to leave in peace if they gave up the city and fortress to him.

The King was angry because of what the siege

had cost him, and the mildest terms he would offer were that six of the chief citizens should present themselves to him. They were to come with their feet and heads bare, with halters round their necks, and bringing the keys of the town with them. "And," said the King, "I will punish them as I think fit," which meant that he intended to have them executed. The six leading merchants came with bare feet and bare heads holding the keys of Calais in their hands, and knelt before the King and said, "We yield ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of the inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered much distress and misery."

The English barons and knights shed tears of pity for them, but the King commanded that their heads should be struck off. The headsmen had been sent for when Queen Philippa, the wife of the King, her eyes streaming with tears, knelt among the captives and prayed to him to have mercy on the men. The King was touched at his heart by the beautiful Queen's pleading, and said, "I give these men to you; do as you please with them." Gladly the Queen took the six noble men to her apartments and gave them new garments, a good dinner, and made them a present of six roubles each.

*I. These Men were Compelled to give up the*



*Keys of the City Gates to their Enemy.*—The people were starving for food. The Governor had already sent out 1700 old men, women, and children because they had nothing to eat. King Philip of France came with an army and tried to rescue the city, but the English were too strong for him, and so Sir Jean de Vienne, the Governor, was compelled to give up the keys of the fortress. Young people, in your fight against sin, never give in to the devil. If you do, you will become his servant, and he will hold you in bondage. Retain your freedom. Five hundred years ago the Dukes of Austria tried to induce the little republic of Switzerland to accept the rule of the Duchy of Austria, but the hardy peasants of the mountains said, “No ; we will retain our independence and manage our own affairs. You will take our sons to fight for you and place heavy taxes upon us. We will not allow you to be our rulers.” It was well for them that they refused to own the Austrians as their rulers, for the Swiss have remained free and independent to this day.

Now, when the tempter comes to you and asks you to yield yourself to him, say, “No ; I will not be your servant ; I will be free from your rule and power. I will not give you the keys of the gates.” When some wicked habit would try and get power over you, refuse to

give yourself over to it. Be free. A Christian teacher asked a Japanese boy the question, "What is sin?" He replied, "It is giving up to the evil one." Don't give up to the devil. Fight out your temptations. Jesus did not give up, though for forty days He was tempted of the devil in the wilderness. Eve gave up to the tempter. She listened to his voice, and he entered the city of her soul through eargate, then through eyegate, and when she had tasted of the forbidden fruit, and it was pleasant to the taste, she tempted her husband to eat, and he "gave up" to the temptation. Thus sin came into the world because our first parents "gave up" to the devil.

When you are in a good fight do not give up. If when the British had to retreat from Mons, and the outlook was dark, had they given up, the whole world would have suffered. The cause of freedom would have received a hard blow, but we fought on until the tide turned in our favour, and historians will tell how the Allies saved the world. The Kaiser once said that the British were very stubborn. One historian has said that in a war the British always won one fight and that was the last. We do not give up in the middle of a fight. Do the same when you are fighting an evil. Don't give up because the battle is a long one. In your early

days vow that you will fight wickedness, and that having begun the fight you will never give up. "Stick it" to the end.

We are not forced to give up the keys of our heart to the enemy. He may lay siege to our souls, but we have a great Deliverer, who is "mighty to save." He gives us armour by which we are protected from all the assaults of the enemy. He gives us strength to overcome temptations by dwelling in our hearts. God who is for us is greater than the enemy who is against us. The men of Calais had to give up because their supplies were cut off. During the Great War soldiers were sometimes cut off, but aeroplanes dropped them supplies and saved them from surrendering. Help from above enabled them to win the battle. Jesus will also supply your need, and in the hour of temptation will give you help. So that the enemy will never be too strong for you.

*II. The Merchants of Calais freely gave Themselves up as Sacrifices for the sake of Others.*—A young soldier was dying with his head upon the breast of a chaplain, and he said, "I am not afraid to die. I am trusting in Jesus. It is good to die for freedom." In his last hour that young soldier found comfort in the thought that he was dying in a good cause. When I see men who were wounded whilst defending

our country from the enemy, I remind myself that they suffered for me.

Then think of the pleasure Queen Philippa would have in looking back and saying, "I saved the lives of those merchants. I saved the name of my husband and the honour of England from being stained by such a black crime which would have been committed but for my pleading." When that brave soldier, Sir William Napier, was dying, he said: "In looking back on my life it would be a comfort to me now if I could remember to have done a perfectly self-sacrificing act—if I could think, I had been ready and willing at any moment to lay down my life for another person's good."

Boys and girls, live noble lives and you will be able to find pleasure in looking back in days to come and seeing what you have done. What an awful looking back the ex-Kaiser and other war-makers will have. There will be thorns in their pillows. The pleading of the Queen for these men, and the clothing and feeding of them after they had been set free, reminds us of Jesus pleading for sinners. During the whole of His blessed life on earth He was pleading with men, and when He was dying on the Cross He prayed for His Father to forgive His murderers. Still He pleads for sinners. Jesus is our intercessor and mediator. Come to God in prayer

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and ask for pardon through the merits of Jesus. Unlock the door of your heart and invite Jesus to come in and give Him the key of your life. He will feed you with the bread of life, clothe you with the garment of His salvation, and send you forth free children of His.

## VIII

### THE BOY AND HIS CUP OF COLD WATER

“Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”—**MATT. x. 42.**

MANY years ago in an Eastern land a Caliph lived in a palace in a city over which he was ruler. The people loved him, and on a given day it was decided that his rich subjects should make him costly presents.

Within the palace there dwelt a boy who loved the Caliph well, but he had no costly present to give him. Inside the city the water was scarce and bitter to the taste, but the boy knew of a well a few miles outside whose waters were clear and cold, and he decided to take a cup and go to the distant well and bring back a drink for the Caliph. He filled his cup at the well, but the journey back was rough, and he frequently stumbled and spilled the water, so that when he reached the palace the cup was not half full.

He went into the audience chamber, and as

soon as he had an opportunity he put the cup in the hands of the Caliph, who was surprised, and for a moment smiled a puzzled smile. Then he drank the water and gave the cup to the boy and thanked him. The boy was so happy that he could scarcely contain himself because of the pleasure he had given the Caliph.

When the boy had gone the courtiers who had brought their rich presents began to talk, and one asked the Caliph :

“ Why did you drink the water the boy brought ? ”

“ Because,” said the ruler, “ the boy had nothing else to bring, and I could see from the sand on his feet that he had brought it from across the desert.”

“ But,” said another courtier, “ it was only a cup of cold water.”

“ Only half a cup,” said the Caliph, “ but the whole cup was full of love, and I took the gift with great gladness, and the smallest gift with love is enough.”

Now, the great King of heaven in this is like the Caliph. As long as we do our best for Him because we love Him He accepts our smallest gift.

*I. It is the Motive which gives or takes Value from our Gifts.*—An unselfish deed of kindness brings its own reward. By doing good, men

enrich their own lives. There is a story told of a little girl who, in the time of drought and famine, one starlit night went into the wood near her home and prayed to God that He would fill her tin cup with water. She fell asleep, but when she awoke behold her vessel was filled with cool, clear water.

She did not stop to drink from the cup, but rushed home so that she might moisten her dying mother's lips. On the way she saw a fainting dog, and, pouring a little water into her hands, she gave the dog a drink, but, wonderful! her cup then changed from tin to silver.

At the door of her home she met a servant, and asked her to take the cup of water to her mother. "Nay," said the mother, who heard the request. "I shall die though I drank it all; drink it thyself and save thy life," and she handed the cup of water back to the servant, and behold the cup turned to shining gold.

"Well," said the servant, "I will give an equal share to all within the house," but as she passed the door she saw a weary, thirsty Stranger standing there, and she gave the cup to Him, and at once there was a radiance round Him which shone and glorified the night, and He said, "Blessed is he that gives a cup of water in My name."

The cup became studded with sparkling



diamonds, and from the cup there burst forth a fountain of clear water, and the diamonds rose up to the heavens and formed a star so that through all the years it might shine and show that unselfish acts will live and shine for ever. Kind deeds never die, but live and bear fruit in many ways. We build up our character by little deeds. Off the coast of Australia there is a coral reef a thousand miles long, and in the South Seas there are many such reefs and islands. They have been made by a tiny little animal called the polyp. For thousands of years millions of these little animals have lived and laboured during their little day building up islands and reefs. So little are the polyps, but how mighty! They create islands out of the ocean. So little by little we create character out of our daily life. Little deeds make up the whole until we have produced a character which will live throughout eternity. Thoughts, words, and deeds are merged into each other until we stand before the people as a whole. Habits, appetites, tastes, and inclinations are blended until we are men and women builded by our own little deeds. All the time we are building God is looking on. We build beneath His watchful eyes.

*II. To Perform a little Kindness may affect our whole Life, and perhaps the Lives of Others.*—After a great battle in England between the English

and the Danes, a young Danish warrior was lost in a wood, and could not find his way back to the Danish camp. After wandering about for a long time, he came to an open portion of the woods, where he saw a yoke of oxen being driven by a fair young boy. Ulf the warrior offered to pay the boy if he would show him the way to the River Severn, where the Danish ships were anchored. "No, I will not help a Dane," said the boy. The young warrior pleaded that he would have pity upon him. At last the boy Godwin took the warrior to his father's cottage, where he was given food and allowed to rest. Then Godwin's father sent him with the warrior, and as they left he said to Ulf: "I fight neither with English nor with Danes, but my son shall go with thee to the Danish camp. I ask for no reward, except that thou shouldst present my son to thy great king and that he may receive him into his service." When they arrived at the camp, Godwin found that Ulf was a person of great rank, who introduced him to the famous King Canute.

The peasant boy became a soldier in the Danish army, and after the Danes had conquered England, Godwin was made governor of a province in England, and the poor were well treated and were delighted because they had an English governor. Godwin married a

beautiful lady, the sister of the Earl of Uphon, and he had a daughter, Editha, who, when she grew up to womanhood, married the good King Edward the Confessor, who ruled all England.

Little did that poor peasant boy think, as he was showing kindness to the lost noble, that it would lead to his becoming governor of an English province, and that his daughter in days to come would be Queen of England. Yet this all happened because the boy Godwin was willing to give a cup of water to the lost noble. That little deed affected the whole of England in later days.

Sometimes a family may be blessed because one person shows kindness to a stranger. One night, after Hugh Bourne, one of the founders of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, in face of great opposition, had been preaching in a town in Staffordshire, he desired a place in which to sleep. It was not always safe in those days for persons to find a home for Methodist preachers. It sometimes meant ridicule, abuse, and persecution, but one woman found Hugh Bourne a home, and he stayed there for a night. He conducted a short service in the house, and the lady and her household were converted, and for years her home was the "preacher's home." Her grandchildren were converted, and her grandson, Albert Stanley, became a local

preacher and class leader, and some years ago he was elected member of Parliament for the district where his grandmother showed hospitality to Hugh Bourne.

God thus proved His own promise true, that "they that honour me I will honour." We have a striking illustration of this in the life of the Apostle Paul, who was stoned by the Jews at Lystra, and left bleeding in the street. A lady took pity upon the suffering Apostle, and had him taken to her home, where he was nursed until he was able to continue on his missionary journey. Her son, Timothy, was converted, and became deeply attached to the Apostle Paul, and became his travelling companion. He was also a Bishop of the Early Church. Thus was Timothy's mother repaid for giving "a cup of cold water" to one of Christ's disciples.

The widow of Sarepta who gave a drink of water to Elijah was blessed in her family in later days.

Be willing to do little things. Perhaps you want to do big things. Well, that may be quite right. Your desire may be very commendable. Men who accomplish great things usually first desire to do them. Perhaps in later days the opportunity to do great things may come, but in the meantime be prepared to do the little things to hand. Perhaps you are not

gifted to do great things, but only ordinary ones. If you can't be a great engineer and construct an Assouan dam, and help to enrich a nation, perhaps you may be a good carpenter and build a cottage for a working man. If you cannot be a great explorer, you can be a farmer and grow wheat to feed the people. If you cannot be a captain on a ship, you may be able to hew the coal which will enable the ship to steam across the sea. If you cannot be famed for doing great things, you can "help lame dogs over stiles."

## IX

### ON PRESENTING THE JUDGE WITH A PAIR OF WHITE GLOVES

“I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone  
a new name is written.”—REV. ii. 17.

THERE is an old custom in England which has also been introduced into New Zealand. It is this: When a judge opens the sessions of the Supreme Court, and it is found that there are no cases of crime to be heard, the sheriff presents the judge with a pair of white gloves, to mark the occasion. All concerned are delighted at the absence of serious crime, not because it means less work, but because it is an indication of a good moral tone in the district.

When a boy I had the impression that policemen, magistrates, and judges were men of hard hearts, very stern, and taking a delight in catching and punishing men, but I have found many kind-hearted men among both the policemen and the gentlemen who administer the law. Of course, they have to enforce the law, and they are a terror to evildoers, but an honest, law-abiding man need not be afraid of them.

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They have to see that the law is justly administered.

Zealeucus, the King of ancient Lucri, issued a law the penalty for breaking which was the loss of both eyes. His own son was the first to transgress, but the King had to see the law was upheld. One eye was removed, but then the father's love overcame him, and he decided to give up one of his own eyes, and thus save his son his other eye, and at the same time uphold the dignity of the law. So, often the magistrates have to do their duty though it may sometimes give them pain. Our judges and magistrates are expected to wear the white gloves of justice. They give equal justice to rich and poor.

When Rome was at the greatness of her power Roman justice was world-famed. When the great Brutus was in power a plot to murder him was discovered. Two of his own sons were among the conspirators who had persuaded them to join with them, believing that if the plot was discovered Brutus would not have his own sons executed, and if he spared them he would be compelled to spare the other conspirators. Brutus condemned his sons to death and upheld that justice which became the ruling principle of Roman civilisation, and which has affected British justice down to the present time, for there is no country in the world

where justice is more firmly established than in the courts of law within the British Empire. Brutus wore the white gloves of justice, though it well-nigh broke his heart to do his duty.

Now, though the sheriff presents the judge with a pair of white gloves, neither of them can take credit for the absence of crime, except so far as the fear of the law has perhaps hindered some persons from becoming criminals. Of course, many causes have probably been at work in helping to reduce crime. Probably the energies of Christian workers and social reformers in the district have done much to hinder crime. For instance, when the judge was presented with a pair of white gloves in a town where all the hotel bars had been closed for some time, there were many who said there was no crime because the sale of liquor had been stopped by the vote of the people. It is certain that the liquor traffic is the greatest cause of crime, and without it our gaols would be almost empty.

*I. Places have sometimes Good or Bad Names.*  
—Sometimes places get a bad name because of the wickedness of the people. Nazareth was a wicked place, and I am sure the pure soul of Jesus was often grieved by the sin of His native town. Its badness was proverbial. Hence Nathaniel said, "Can any good thing come



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out of Nazareth?" The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had a bad name, and to-day if there is much wickedness in a town people sometimes declare it to be like Sodom. But some places get a good name.

I know a township in New Zealand where there is a good moral tone, and I have heard people sneeringly say, "Oh, it is a place of psalm-singing Methodists." I heard another place called "Holy ——." The early settlers in the district were godly men, and many of their children and grandchildren have followed in their footsteps, with the result that there is very little crime, but much goodness in the district.

*II. We should Aim to Wear the White Gloves of a Good Name.*—The gloves meant freedom from crime, a clean crime sheet, and that the district had a good name.

In Belgium the children during the Great War learnt to love the British soldier. In the early part of the war many Belgian refugees found shelter in England, and a boy and girl were taken into a Liverpool family. The girl cried for about two days, and neither ate nor slept. A doctor was called in, and he came wearing a khaki suit. As soon as the girl saw him she ran to him with a glad cry of "Bittish, Bittish." She soon fell asleep in his arms.

Was not that a splendid proof of the love and respect of the Belgians for the British soldier? Yes, soldiers can wear white gloves.

Soldiers in uniform ought not to enter a public-house bar and take strong drink. They should be placed in the same position as policemen, who are forbidden to drink at the bar when on duty. A soldier disgraces his uniform by getting drunk. During the American war two soldiers were about to enter a saloon in Washington, when one of them felt a hand placed upon his arm, and looking up he saw President Lincoln, who held out his hand to shake hands, as he said: "I don't like to see our uniform going into those places." No soldier in uniform ought to drink at the public-house bar.

*III. We should be Ambitious to have a Clean Record.*—Sometimes when a man is tried in Court the prosecuting counsel will say, "His record is against him," and if you were to read the crime sheet you would see a number of convictions recorded in red ink. Perhaps he had used several different names during his career of crime, because he did not want to be identified with his former life of crime, or so that his old friends would not know him, and sometimes so that he may save the family name from disgrace.

You should try and keep your family record clean.

*IV. Family Pride of the Right Kind is Commendable.*—There are some names which stand for all that is honourable, and those bearing such names are proud that there is no stain upon the family name. In the library of some of the old families of England there are oil paintings of the ancestors of the family, and there may be one turned with the face to the wall. That represents the man who failed to keep up the family honour. Keep up the honour of your family. In business, in pleasure, keep your honour clean. There are many men amongst us with whom family honour is a large part of their religion. Their honour is a large asset in their business dealings with their fellow-men. Their word is trusted. They wear the white gloves of honour.

Young people, if you wish to have a clean record, walk in the footsteps of Jesus, who wore the white robe of a righteous life.

## X

### SOME MEN WHO PLAYED CRICKET

CRICKET is the national game of England, and has been played by Englishmen for over four hundred years. Wherever they have planted the flag they have pitched their wickets. In India, Canada, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and West Indies Englishmen play cricket. It is a clean, manly game, and is often made the measure of honourable conduct. To say a man "plays cricket" means that he is not guilty of trickery or deceit in his transactions.

The three most important men on a cricket field are the umpire, the batsman, and the bowler.

*I. The Umpire.*—The umpire is a man who thoroughly understands the game, and has the confidence of the players. His decisions are final, and it is not cricket to challenge them. He watches the game closely to see that it is played fairly. He is the conscience of the game.

Now, in the game of life conscience should be the umpire, and we should obey its voice.

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As a nation we strive to play the game, and appoint umpires to see it is played fair. Our judges, magistrates, policemen, and jurymen are umpires, and the lawyers place the facts before the Court so that the umpires may come to a right decision.

At great crises in the world's history England has acted the part of umpire among the nations, and they have trusted her because she has stood for justice and right. She has entered countries like India and Egypt, and by her righteous government has wonderfully improved the living conditions of the people. During her rule she has given the people liberty of conscience.

One day Oliver Cromwell stood at Ludgate Circus, and saw a minister of the Gospel being punished for praying without a book and singing the psalms he loved. His nostrils were slit, his ears cropped, and he was branded on the forehead. A great indignation took possession of Cromwell's soul, and he vowed that he would fight for toleration, freedom, and liberty of conscience, and he did. By his work he made England famed as a land of freedom. England has "played cricket" because she has had such leaders as Oliver Cromwell.

Legislators should be umpires, with whom conscience is king. When looking over his

past life, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the ex-Premier of England, said: "I have always tried to go straight." He was a modest, honest statesman, who played a straight game, and he made his biggest score when the Government of which he was Prime Minister gave self-government to newly conquered South Africa, and converted enemies into friends by observing the golden rule. Statesmen should "play cricket." The editor of an English newspaper wrote: "Though we have always been opposed politically to Viscount Grey, we recognise in him an English gentleman. His character has long been recognised as one of the assets of public life." He has always played cricket.

Let *conscience be your guide in the path of duty*. Obey its voice, no matter what is the result. Victor Hugo, in his "Ninety-three," tells how Gauvin, the heroic leader of the Republican army, and his uncle, the Marquis de Lautenac, leader of the Royalists during the French Revolution, had vowed to kill each other if they had the opportunity. At last the Marquis is besieged in a burning castle. He may safely escape by a secret passage, but he hears a peasant woman screaming that her three children are in a room in the castle. He returns and rescues the innocent children, and allows himself to be captured. Gauvin has now a struggle

with his conscience. He believes it would be well for France that the Marquis should die, but he has risked his life and freedom to save three innocent children. It was a noble deed of sacrifice and he will save him, though he knows it will probably cost him his life. He arranges for the Marquis to escape from prison, and as a punishment Gauvin dies on the scaffold, but he is happy in the thought that he has obeyed his conscience. It is a wonderful instance of the power of conscience.

Let your conscience be your king. Do the right and leave the rest with God. When Dr Clifford was thirteen years of age his mother said to him : " John, when you go out into the world take care to carry the Gospels with you. Read them, understand what Jesus Himself means by what He says, and when you know what He tells you to do, do it in scorn of all consequences," and, said Dr Clifford, " That counsel has for seventy-three years or more been a guide, a stimulus, and inspiration to me." By following that counsel he became one of England's great men.

When President Garfield was a lad he attended a series of evangelistic meetings, during which he said to his minister : " I am persuaded that it is the duty of every man, and especially of every young man, to accept religion and seek to

be a man." He gave his hand to the minister and his heart to Christ. From that day Christ was his King. The motto on the Garfield family coat-of-arms was, "By the cross I conquer." Garfield conquered himself, and became a noble character, because he allowed Christ to be his Guide. When King Edward VII. ascended the throne he is reported to have said to his friends, "I will play the game." In this every boy can "follow the King," and in the strength of God play the game, on the field of daily life.

*II. The Bowler and the Batsman.*—The one object of the bowler is to get the batsman out, and to do this he bowls straight balls and break balls. Some of them fast, and some slower. He "bowls with his head," and tempts the batsman until he beats him and gets his wicket. From the moment the batsman is at the wicket he is alert; he knows there are eleven men trying to get him out, and there are a dozen ways in which he may lose his wicket, and just when he is feeling confident he is perhaps either clean bowled or caught in the slips.

*Life is like a Game of Cricket.*—There is a "demon" bowler, who is always on the look-out to bowl us out. He has had a lot of experience; he has been bowling a long time, and he bowls quite a variety of balls, and some of them are very deceitful. He likes to see a



man self-confident and off his guard, because he knows he has a better chance of bowling him. Peter was self-confident when he said, "Lord, though all the world forsake Thee, yet will not I." But when Peter in the Judgment Hall swore he was not a follower of Christ, he was clean bowled. After that Peter was more careful, and he warned men of the bowler who was going about trying to bowl them. Samson played with the demon's balls, but he was caught out in the slips.

A young man has been an abstainer all his life, but one evening at a party he is pressed to take a glass of wine. He yields, then a little later he takes a glass of champagne; then he is off his guard, and takes more liquor. He becomes quarrelsome, and strikes a man, and he is turned out of the room—caught in the slips. Drunken men can't play cricket of any kind. A young man is told by a companion that a certain horse is sure to win a race. He takes five pounds of his employer's money, intending to restore it after the race. He loses the money, his theft is discovered, and he is punished. He loses his character and occupation. He has been caught in the slips. Neither stealing nor gambling is "playing cricket." The Apostle Paul was continually warning men and women lest they be "overtaken" or bowled

by the demon bowler. He tells us that he was always on his guard. Some batsmen make a big score, and are not out at the end of the game, or having made a century, they retire. They had beaten the bowlers. Keep up your wicket, so that at the end of life you can retire "not out."

Remember, if you have been "bowled" by the evil bowler you can have another innings. Try again!

## XI

### WALKING ON THE VERGE

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”—1 THESS. v. 22.

A SHORT time ago I was walking in a park, when I saw the following notice near the path : “Don’t walk on the verge.” The edge of the grass plot had been very neatly cut, and the gardener did not wish anyone to step upon it and so spoil the verge. You could walk on the path or on the grass—there was plenty of room on either—but said the gardener :— “Please do not walk on the verge and make my work look ugly.” Then for the walker’s sake it was best to keep away from the verge. He might trip over and sprain his ankle, and have to go limping home, or he might fall on to the ground.

There are some boys and girls, and adults, too, who take a delight in walking on the verge. Sometimes they do it for mere foolish bravado. A number of boys were bathing on the beach. The tide was going out, and it was dangerous to bathe beyond a given line. One boy said

he would go right to the line. When he got there, he thought he would go a little farther. A few seconds later he shouted for help. The life-boat was run out, and he was saved after being almost drowned. He had gone to the verge and nearly paid the penalty. Men foolishly walk on the verge, and often fall over. There is plenty of room on the path or the grass if they would walk on either.

*I. Let me Ask you to Keep off the Verge in your Speech.*—There are many people who would never think of swearing; their conscience would not allow them. Yet they use slang words, which are closely related to swearing, and are certainly very bad language. When such persons use slang they think it shows that they are very clever and brilliant, and that their speech is racy. They hope to secure a smile of approval from those who are listening. Keep slang out of your speech, because by using it you have gone a long way towards swearing.

Don't tell stories or jokes which are not sweet or clean. If you hear such a story show your disapproval of it and don't repeat it. Keep off the verge of lying. There are persons who lie, yet they would be insulted if anyone called them liars. There are some people who find it difficult to confine themselves within the bounds of truth. They allow their imagination

to run away with them and are guilty of lying by exaggeration.

My friend, Farmer Furrow, is a big-hearted, genial man, but he has a great habit of "stretching." You always have to take a large percentage off his statements if you wish to get somewhere near the truth. The roosters in his farmyard are as big as peacocks; his hens are the size of turkeys; his ducks are geese; his geese are like swans; his swans are as large as ostriches; his ostriches are as big as the ancient moa; the fruits in his orchard are all of the non-such species. The stock upon his farm in his opinion ought to take the prize at the annual agricultural show, and his children are the most gifted in the district. He lies by the use of the magnifying glass and the multiplication table.

There are some men who in their usual conversation would never think of lying, but they seem to think it is quite right to stretch the truth beyond recognition in their business advertisements. They declare that they sell the best goods on earth at a lower price than other people sell inferior articles. When you see such advertisements you feel the advertisers are going over the verge. There are boys and girls who lie for fun or for an excuse, and they call such lying "white lies" or "little fibs,"

or "little fairies." Lying is lying, and names do not change lying into truthfulness.

*II. Some People run to the Verge in Dress.*—Some women by their dress make themselves objects of amusement, ridicule, and curiosity. They powder their face and spoil their complexion, and their general get-up proclaims that they are citizens of Vanity Fair. Others wear dresses which in shape are scarcely decent. Now I do not advocate that all women should either wear Salvation Army costumes or Quaker bonnets, or dress like the old-fashioned Methodists; but I think they should draw the line and keep on the safe side of it.

*III. Keep off the Verge of doubtful Pleasures.*—Fly from the appearance of evil. Avoid vulgar humour. Let me warn you against some of the picture postcards. Many are vulgar and profane, and some of them are immodest in their suggestiveness and would never be seen in the shop of a bookseller who had any regard for his own good name or the feelings of his customers. The police ought to be notified of the existence of such postcards. Many of the films shown at the picture shows are vulgar, and some of them are far from being uplifting in their tendency. Don't patronise the vulgar shows.

*IV. Don't go near the Verge of Stealing.*—

Some people who would never think of committing a burglary or a highway robbery or of picking a person's pocket, or of doing anything for which they could be taken to Court, will rob a person of their good name by idle gossip. When you hear such people discussing another person you feel like shouting, "Stop, thieves!" There are many roundabout ways in which people steal. One of them is by little crooked tricks in business. Boys and girls may go near the verge of stealing when they "copy" at school or don't play fair in the games.

*V. Don't Run on the Verge in using Strong Drink.*—Some persons are always running on the verge of drunkenness. They see how many glasses of liquor they can drink without being drunk. They boast that they are moderate drinkers, and they run as near the verge as possible, but one day they go right over and get drunk. The moderate drinker is always walking on the verge. The only real safety is found in the path of total abstinence. Don't be persuaded to take your first glass of liquor because your companion says, "There is no harm in one glass." Keep off the verge.

*VI. Keep a Tender Conscience so that you can Detect the Approach of Sin.*—You will then be able to see when you are getting near the verge. A sensitive conscience will warn you when you get

near to the verge. An American scientist named Professor Tessen den has invented a wonderful apparatus by which can be heard the stealthy approach of the submarine. Sound travels four times more quickly through water than through air, and ordinarily the submarine can only be heard a comparatively short distance away. But by these new instruments, which are very sensitive, sounds have been heard which have travelled thirty miles, and submarines can be detected many miles away, and the listener can tell which side of the ship the submarine is approaching because the sound is strongest on that side. Ships can now have ears and hear when the enemy is approaching. That is an illustration of what our conscience should be like—sensitive to detect the first approach of sin. That is what is meant by the words of the hymn—

“ Quick as the apple of an eye,  
O God, my conscience make !  
Awake my soul, when sin is nigh,  
And keep it still awake.”

Fly from the appearance of evil.



## XII

### THE KNOCKER-UP

“Behold an angel of the Lord awoke him.”—ACTS xii. 7.

MANY years ago I knew an old man in a Lancashire town who was known as “Owd Benny, the ‘knocker-up.’” Each morning he went round knocking up bakers, carters, and factory hands, including boys and girls who were “half-timers.” “Owd Benny” had a stick about nine or ten feet long, with a bunch of thin wire at the end of it, which he let fall upon the bedroom windows. He then gave the wire a shake, and it made a noise loud enough to waken the soundest sleepers. Some of them were not easily wakened, but he shook his wires until he heard them shout, “All right, Benny.”

The knocker-up was a very useful man, and saved many of the factory workers from being “quartered,” and as a consequence losing a fourth of their day’s wages. It is good that there are so many different kinds of “knockers-up” in the world. Reformers, missionaries, preachers, Sunday School teachers, and others.

*Boys and Girls require Waking Up if they are to make the Best of their Lives.*—Parents know this, and so they try to waken the children's powers of thought, observation, and imagination. To do this they give them good advice, tell them stories, buy them books to read, and send them to the day school, where the teachers wake up their mental powers as they pass through the classes or standards, so that when their school days are finished they are well awake. Perhaps on leaving school, John is apprenticed to a trade, and his employer wakes him up, or Mary learns music, and the gift within her is developed by her teacher; or Will becomes a student at the University, where he gains a degree, and people admire his brilliant gifts.

*Some Boys and Girls are longer in Waking Up than Others.*—There are boys who are so slow and sleepy at school, and are so late in waking up that they are called dunces, yet very often, when they are thoroughly awake, they have greater mental powers than those who wake up more quickly. Some boys who were "boobies," and could not pass their examinations at school or college, have become clever men, and risen to high positions of dignity and honour. Goldsmith, the famous author, was a blockhead while at school, and for some years after he was

looked upon as a dull young man, but when forty years of age he wrote that charming book, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Some boys are late at waking up because they are put to a kind of work they do not like, and in which they are not interested. When Linnæus, the great botanist, was at school he was a dunce, but later, when he went into the gardens and woods, and studied the flowers and plants, his friends were astonished at the powers he displayed as a student of nature. The dull boy may only be late at waking up. Love for his work may rouse his powers.

*Sometimes a Boy's Companions help to Waken him up.*—It is good when companions waken the best in each other like David and Jonathan, who strengthened each other in God. When boys and girls become Christians, Christ becomes their daily Companion. He awakens their highest powers, and places noble ideals before them. Sir Ernest Shackleton, in his book *South*, tells us how he and his two companions left their twenty-two comrades on Elephant Island, and in a small boat they rowed and sailed eight hundred miles over one of the stormiest seas in the world. They afterwards walked across South Georgia, that land of mountains, snow and glaciers, which no man had ever crossed before, and Sir Ernest says :

"I do not doubt that Providence guided us not only across those snowfields, but also across the stormy White Sea. I know that during that long march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia it often seemed to me that we were four and not three, and Worsley and Crean had the same idea." Yes, if we take Christ as our Guide He will be with us, whether we travel over icefields or walk through life's fiery furnaces.

*Sometimes People Wake Up Suddenly.*—I have been awakened by earthquakes, by thunder, and by fire alarms, to the reality of things around me. So sometimes boys suddenly wake up to the realities of life and the wisdom of having high ideals. Robert Clive was a wild, reckless, and venturesome lad, and he grew up to be a wicked young fellow. One day, feeling that he was not living for any worthy purpose, and that he was wasting his life, he determined to shoot himself. Twice he placed the gun to his head and pulled the trigger, but it refused to go off, and he said, "I believe Providence has ordained that my life should be of service to others." It was well for the British Empire that the gun did not go off. Robert Clive began to live for a purpose. His greatest achievement was the winning of India for England.

Sir Walter Raleigh, when a boy, woke up by listening to a sailor tell of his adventures in many lands, and said the adventurer: "There are many unknown lands and seas to be explored." Young Raleigh made a vow that he would become an explorer. The adventurer from the Spanish Main woke him up.

Abraham Lincoln woke up to a great life purpose when, as a youth, he stood in the market-place and saw men, women, and children being sold as slaves. Wives were separated from their husbands, and children from their parents, and his heart burned with a great hatred of slavery. He made the following vow: "If ever I get a chance I will hit this thing hard," and he did, for he set free all slaves in America.

Moses woke up that day when he visited his brethren and saw what burdens they had to bear, and the manner in which they were being treated by their hard taskmasters. He said: "I will no longer be looked upon as the son of Pharaoh's daughter and heir to the honours and pleasures of a royal position. I will live to deliver my own people." For eighty years he followed the vision that came to him that day, and he had the joy of leading the delivered Israelites to the entrance of the Promised Land.

So sometimes God speaks to men that they

may wake up nations. This was true of Wilberforce, who woke up England to the horrors of slavery, or of John Knox, who woke up Scotland to a new life, or of John Wesley, who roused England to a new religious life, or of evangelists like General Booth, D. L. Moody, and others, who awakened the people to their spiritual state. I hope some boy or girl who reads this address may be used of God as a voice to wake up the people.

*At Conversion People are Awakened by the Holy Spirit.*—When a man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus he receives new eyesight. We are told that scales fell from the eyes of the Apostle Paul after his conversion. No matter what those scales may have been, I am sure he received new eyesight at conversion, and he had a vision of the new life he was to live. The poet sings of his conversion :

“ I woke, the dungeon flamed with light,  
My chains fell off, my heart was free ;  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.”

Let your prayer be, “ Lord, open the eyes of my understanding, that I may see how to live a noble and useful life.”

## XIII

### “HE’S GONE TO THE DOGS”

“The dogs of my flock.”—JOB xxx. 1.

WHEN a man who has been a respectable member of society becomes very wicked and lives a life of dissipation, we often hear the remark made, “He’s gone to the dogs.”

Where did this saying originate? Perhaps it came from the Romans. The ace in dice was called *canis* (dog), and a cast of dice, when a player had lost his all, was thrown in three aces, and so dog came to mean ruin, loss, bad luck. Thus, to go to the dogs meant to go to the bad. Or perhaps the saying may refer to the horse being taken to the knacker’s yard. What was once a fine-looking horse had become only fit for dogs’ food. He had got to the last and lowest state. Now, if this expression is always used to describe men who go to the bad, it is not fair to the dogs. There are good and bad dogs.

*I. A Man can go to the Dogs to learn Faithfulness.*—For hundreds of years the dog has

been man's faithful friend. We do not find much in the Bible about dogs, and very little of what we do find is in their favour. Perhaps the friendship between man and the dog has increased since then, especially in Western countries. Often, when the dog has been ill-treated and starved, and has had good cause to leave his master and his poor home, he has remained as a faithful companion.

Hundreds of striking illustrations could be given of dogs defending their master's body and property. Some, when their masters have died, have lain upon their graves and refused to leave, and have died there. I recently read of a young lady dying at sea, and as her dog saw her body go over the side of the ship, at the time of burial, he leaped into the sea and was drowned. How intelligent some dogs are. Pointers, setters, terriers and retrievers very intelligently serve their masters, but I think the shepherd's dog is the most intelligent of all. The way in which he "rounds up" a flock of sheep is very remarkable. He will fetch stray sheep of his master's out of a large, strange flock and bring them back to their own flock.

Many years ago we had a dog at the farm in my native village which, at milking time, we would send for the cows. This dog would



sort out our cows from among others on the common and bring them home, and if anybody tried to hinder Scott from doing his duty he showed his teeth and prepared for fight. Yes, we can go to the dogs and learn faithfulness. The unfaithfulness of a professing friend hurts longer than the bite of a dog. Perhaps the poet Byron felt this when he wrote this epitaph upon his Newfoundland dog :

“To mark a friend’s remains these stones arise ;  
I never knew but one, and here he lies.”

Sometimes a dog is faithful to his master by assisting him in his wickedness. He knows what his master wants him to do and he does it. The question of right or wrong he leaves for his master to decide. That is not part of the dog’s business. We have often read of the faithfulness of the burglar’s dog. In olden times men were hanged for sheep-stealing, and in the North of England it often happened that the sheep-stealer’s dog was hanged with his master, because he had been his accomplice. I think that was not just to the dog, because he had only been faithful to his wicked master, and would have been just as faithful to an honest one.

*II. A Man can go to the Dogs and learn to be a Hard Worker.*—Of course, there are some

lazy dogs. They eat and get fat, but won't work; they just lie about in the sunshine or in front of the fire or under the table, and if they died they would be no loss, but their death would be a gain, because some useful dog could be fed with the food the lazy, useless dog would have eaten. But many dogs are very useful—some in protecting property, some in assisting men in hunting, some in working on the farm, where a shepherd and his collie dog can do more work than several men would be able to do without a dog.

In countries like Holland dogs are harnessed to greengrocers' carts and to milk carts, and sometimes the farmer will ride to market in a little trap drawn by a number of dogs. Some time ago I heard Sir Ernest Mawson tell how much the dogs helped him and his party in their travels towards the South Pole. To any lazy man, who tries to live on other people's work, I would say, "Go to the dogs and learn to work." No healthy man, whether he is rich or poor, has a right to be lazy. God intended man to work. Jesus, when on earth, said, "I must work." That is God's decree: Man must work. A lazy man tempts the devil, for it is still true that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." Get busy and defeat the devil.

*III. We can go to the Dogs and learn how*

*to Help Others.*—You have heard of the dogs of St Bernard, the big dogs of the Alps. They are trained by the kind-hearted monks to find travellers who, having become exhausted in the cold, have lain down to die. When the dogs find them they bark for assistance. They have a little barrel fastened to their neck, and if the traveller has sufficient strength he can get refreshment from it. There was one famous dog called Barry, who saved the lives of forty persons who were lost in the snow. He was a very big dog, and it is supposed that a traveller who was frightened of him must have killed good old Barry, because he was found dead. Over his grave this inscription was written: “Barry, the heroic, saved the lives of forty persons and was killed by the forty-first.” What a splendid record for a dog. Forty lives saved by a dog!

Napoleon, when riding over the field of Bassano after the battle, saw a dog guarding the body of his slain master, and, pointing to the animal, the Emperor said to the members of his staff, “That dog teaches us a lesson of humanity.” It would have been better for Europe if Napoleon had learnt a lesson of humanity from the dog. Young people! Go to the dogs and learn how to be faithful to your friends; to work hard and to help others.

## XIV

### THREE MEN WHO STOOD THE TEST

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.”—HEB. xi. 24.

WE are very often influenced by example, and I want to tell you about three men who, when the hour came, and they were tested, were able to stand firm, and by standing the test were of help to others. The first man is

*Billy Sunday, the Baseball Player.*—The Rev. William Sunday, D.D., better known as “Billy” Sunday, is one of the greatest living evangelists. No preacher has ever been able to draw such large crowds to hear him. For more than twenty-five years he has been an evangelist, and during that time some hundreds of thousands of persons have professed conversion in the services he has conducted. Largely through his labours some of the American towns voted out the liquor traffic.

There came a time in his life when he had to make a great decision. He had been converted about three years, and during that time he had been a member of the famous

Chicago baseball team. He was very popular with the crowd. He was a daring, dashing player, and was one of the "heroes" of the team. He could run a hundred yards in ten seconds. He felt impressed that he ought to give himself up to some form of Christian work, but he was a poor speaker in those days. All the speaking he had done was to give his Christian experience in a halting manner. He had two offers made to him. One was to sign an agreement to continue as a member of the Chicago baseball team for another year and to receive about a hundred guineas a month as wages, or become an assistant at the Chicago Y.M.C.A. at a pay of about twenty guineas a month—if he got it. He prayed over the matter.

Many of his friends told him that he would be a fool to give up a hundred guineas a month and take twenty instead. There was the test, £105 per month to play baseball or £21 per month to serve the Lord in a very inferior position. He loved to play baseball. It was a passion with him. The pay was very good, to refuse the offer meant to take twenty guineas instead of one hundred. He was now a married man, and had weekly expenses to meet, but he stood the test and accepted the humble position in which he could serve God.

In a wonderful manner God has led him until

he has become America's great evangelist. His whole future depended upon the choice he made. Think of the good that would have been left undone had he loved baseball more than he loved Christ, and said "No" to God's call. He said "Yes" to God, and He has honoured him. When he made the choice he had no idea how God was going to use him. He could not see into the future, but there are thousands to-day who have cause to thank God that "Billy Sunday" stood the test and made the great decision.

*II. Dr Harry Guinness, the Young Medical Student.*—When Dr Harry Guinness, the well-known evangelist, was a young man of nineteen years, he became a medical student in the London Hospital, Whitechapel. On the first day he met a kindly young fellow, who said, "You're a new chap; come down to our Debating society, or, as we call it, the Clinical society. It meets to-night. One of our rules is that no one is allowed to allude to a religious thing." Harry Guinness went. Mr (later Sir) Frederick Treves was chairman.

During the discussion one man, when on his feet, said something about Jesus Christ which made young Guinness's blood boil and his ears tingle. When the speaker sat down, Harry Guinness rose and said: "Mr President and

gentlemen, I do not know whether you would like to hear a first year man speak, and I may be out of order, but if we are not allowed to allude to religious matters, then I beg to protest against the words of the gentleman who has just sat down. He has spoken against One who is my Lord, my Saviour, and my King in a way that has made my blood boil, and I beg to protest against it."

He sat down wondering whether there would be a tremendous hissing, but instead of that there was a thunder of applause, and at the close the chairman said, "Come back to these meetings, and if any man ever does what that man did to-night you do exactly what you did." Harry Guinness stood the tests and gained the respect and admiration of his fellow-students.

*III. Frederick N. Charrington, the Brewer's Son.*—Frederick N. Charrington, the famous evangelist and temperance reformer, was the son of a wealthy brewer. He was brought up in luxury, educated by study and travel, and it was expected that he would become a partner in the great brewing business of his father. He became soundly converted, and shortly afterwards, as he was walking in one of the streets of London, he passed a public-house known as the "Rising Sun," when he saw a poor woman

with two or three children go up to the swing doors and call to her husband inside to give her some money to buy bread for herself and children. The husband came out, and without speaking to his wife, knocked her down into the gutter.

Frederick Charrington, looking up, saw the name Charrington in huge gilt letters on the top of the public-house. This was one of the public-houses owned by the Charrington firm. He realised that it was the beer brewed by his father's brewery which was the cause of much of this misery, and that he was expected to carry on such a dirty, diabolical business. He said to himself: "Well, that man has knocked his wife into the gutter, but with the same blow he has knocked me out of the brewery business." He would not have the guilt upon his soul of being responsible for the misery caused by the brewery business.

He told his father that he would give up all connection with the trade in alcohol and be true to his conscience and the God whom he served. So he gave up a fortune of a million and a quarter, or, in other words, an income of about a thousand pounds a week. Think of what a man could do with a thousand pounds a week. Yet he gladly sacrificed this for the sake of the Christ who gave Himself to redeem him from



sin. Many years have passed since then, and God has greatly blessed the man who stood the test. For Frederick Charrington has done a wonderful work by his great mission in London, proving the promise to be true that "They who honour Me I will honour them."

*IV. There will come a Testing Time to all of you.*—It sometimes seems as though all our religious training has been preparing us for the one great test which, if we stand successfully, strengthens and purifies our characters, and we rise to a higher level. We walk the higher way. If we fail to stand the test we are poorer, and we walk the lower path. Sometimes you may have to choose not between right and wrong, but between two courses, both of which are right. One is good, but the other is better. To choose the better may mean sacrifice, and you may be tempted to refuse to pay the price of the best. Choose the better part and it shall not be taken away from you. The young ruler who came to Jesus had, in part, chosen the good. He had kept the commandments, he had been a good citizen and a good son, but when Christ asked him to choose the best, and he saw what the price was, he refused to pay it. He failed to stand the test.

Aaron failed to stand the test. His brother Moses was on the Mount with God, and Aaron

was left to manage the camp, but he failed to use his opportunity. During these forty days while he was in charge of the camp the people turned to idolatry and began to worship the golden calf. Aaron failed to stand the test.

*V. In the Hour of Testing we shall need Divine Strength.*—We are told that when Jesus was being tested in Gethsemane angels came and strengthened Him. If we look to Christ He will always send help to us when we are being tested. Jesus told Peter that Satan had desired to have him, but, said Jesus, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” Jesus knows when we are being tested, and if we pray to Him He will supply us with spiritual strength so that we shall stand the test and become conquerors.

## XV

### THE LADY WHO LIT THE LAMP THAT IS STILL BURNING

“Her works praise her.”—PROV. xxxi. 31.

THE early history of Florence Nightingale shows that God gradually prepares a person for the supreme work of his or her life. Her parents were English, but she was born in Florence, Italy, in 1823. She was highly educated, had brilliant gifts, and was every inch a true woman. She was not masculine, but was gentle, though firm as a rock in doing her duty. At twenty-one years of age she travelled round Europe, and visited the civil and military hospitals in the various countries. For seven years she studied the system of nursing and management in such hospitals. She then commenced her training as a nurse in Germany. After about three years she returned to England, having spent ten years in unconsciously preparing herself for the great work of her life, which should bless the nations of the earth, not only in her day, but in the years which should follow.

In 1854 Britain went to war with Russia, and awful reports reached England of the terrible sufferings of the wounded in the hospitals at Scutari. The War Office accepted Florence Nightingale's offer of service, and in a short time she and her nursing staff sailed for Scutari. Awful was the state of the hospitals and patients when she arrived. The buildings were unsanitary. Fearful was the stench. The wounded, from ten at night until morning, were left in the dark. They cried for water, but they could not get a drink. Men died in the dark, others were delirious, but there was no one to watch over them. The wounds of the sufferers were unskillfully treated, and in many cases neglected. The death-rate in the wards was higher than that of the battlefield.

Florence Nightingale, then a young woman of thirty-one years of age, speedily worked a transformation. The hospitals were made sanitary, the wounded were cared for, and thousands of valuable lives were saved. The civilised world took note of her work, which was one of the birth hours of history. By it she exalted the calling of a nurse, so that since her day it has been looked upon as the noblest of occupations. She opened a door of usefulness for women, and many thousands have followed in her footsteps.

Now Florence Nightingale's work teaches us—

*I. The Power of One Person to Bring a Blessing to Many.*—Before she went to Scutari the hospitals were places of disease and death. By her work they were changed and thousands of lives were saved. She lit up the hospital wards, so that men no longer suffered in the dark. She herself visited the wounded during the night, carrying a lamp which gave out a bright light, and the sufferers spoke of her as the "Lady of the Lamp." Artists have painted her carrying her lamp as she visited the sufferers. Poets have sung of her lighting up the wards. Historians have placed upon the pages of our nation's history a record of the imperishable work done by this pioneer war nurse. Other nations, seeing her work, took steps to care for the sick and wounded, and her labours led to the commencement of the movement which resulted in the founding of the Red Cross system of nursing. Thus through her labours thousands have been blessed.

Boys and girls, seek to become blessings to others. This is a noble ambition. The explorers in the tropics and the Arctic regions work not for themselves. The discoverers and inventors aim to enrich the world by their labours. The history of travel, discovery, and

science supplies us with many illustrations of men who, by their labours, have conferred blessings upon thousands.

*II. From Florence Nightingale's work we learn that it is better to heal wounds than to make them.* We take off our hats to the noble army of Red Cross nurses. Their work is to heal. We admire the doctors who enter the sick room and face disease or risk their lives on the battlefield in their work of healing.

We should not so much admire the men who make war as those who prevent it. It is better to settle national differences by arbitration than by the sword. Blessed are the peace-makers. Boys and girls, it is in your power to make or heal wounds. Your tongue can be used like a sword. It can cut and wound, or it can be the means of healing wounds. Tale-bearers are wound-makers. They often separate the best of friends. A peace-maker may often bring together friends who have been parted, and he may reconcile enemies.

*III. God may be Preparing a Person unconsciously for the Great Work of his Life.*—Florence Nightingale's life, up to the time of her departure for Scutari, had been a gradual preparation for her life's work. Her educative travels, studies, and training, united with natural gifts of organisation, combined to qualify

her for her great work. Yet during those years of preparation she did not know what the future had in store for her.

God often prepares men for their work, and at the time they do not know they are being prepared, but when they are ready God knocks at their door and bids them come forth. He never knocks at the wrong door, or at the wrong time. He always knows where to find the man He wants. Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob, was a good message boy, and served his father faithfully on his farm. When he was in charge of Potiphar's household, he managed everything so well that his master was pleased with his work, and when he was suffering innocently in prison, he acted in such a manner that his gaolers were delighted with him. God knocked at the prison door and led him forth to be Prime Minister of Egypt.

During all these years on the farm, in Potiphar's house, and in prison he had done his best, and was at the same time unconsciously preparing himself to be the saviour of Egypt. It was the same in the life of Daniel. He was true to God and did his best when a captive youth, and as the years passed, his godly character and his abilities brought him into prominence and gained him favour with the king. In the end Daniel became Prime Minister

of the Persian Empire. These men did not know how great was the work for which they were being prepared, but they did their best in the lower, and so gradually prepared themselves for the higher position.

God said of Cyrus, the deliverer of the Jews, "I have girded thee, and thou hast not known me." Unknown to Cyrus, God was preparing him to be the deliverer of His people. In the Epworth vicarage, Susannah Wesley trained her two sons, John and Charles, in the paths of righteousness and duty. She placed before them great ideals, and by the manner of her training she was unconsciously laying the foundations of Methodism. When John Wesley commenced holding services he did not expect to build a great Nonconformist Church such as the Methodist Church has become, but he builded better than he knew, and God used John Wesley beyond his greatest expectations. General Booth's training as an earnest evangelistic Methodist minister prepared him to become the founder of the Salvation Army. When the clock strikes the hour God knows where to find the right man.

In our Nation's history there has always been a man ready for the great crisis. Cromwell, who fought for liberty, Drake, who, by the help of God, defeated the Spanish Armada,



Wellington, who defeated Napoleon, and saved England and Europe, were all raised up to meet the needs of the hour. Young people, the great lesson is to use your time and opportunities, and you may be unconsciously preparing yourself for some great work. Do your best every day, and trust in God as your guide. Even if you never reach a great position you will have the joy of knowing you have done your duty.

## XVI

### A MODEST LION-KILLER

“Behold, a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.”—JUDGES xiv. 5, 6.

SAMSON fell in love with a young lady who was a Philistine. His parents objected to his marrying anyone but an Israelite. “But,” said Samson, “you should see her. She is a beauty; you would fall in love with her yourself.” His parents decided to go to Timnath and see the lady. Samson also went, but he did not go with his parents. As a rule a young man does not care to take his father and mother with him when he goes courting. On the way down a roaring lion sprang at him, and Samson, the young giant, killed the lion, but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done. Young people, I want to tell you about this lonely fight by a modest man in the daily path of life.

*I. Samson the Lion-Killer was a very Modest Man.*—When he had killed the lion he did

not go about bragging of what he had done. He did not even tell his father or mother that he had killed it. His modesty shows us that he was a great man. A man who could kill a lion with his own hands without a weapon and not speak about it was surely a modest man. Goliath of Gath, the great giant of the Philistines, would not have done that. How he would have boasted if he had killed David the youth! He would have carried his dead body among the Philistines to show that he had killed him. When Goliath came shouting and boasting, David said, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts." That is how to kill life's roaring lions, in the name and strength of God.

Great men are modest. They do things and leave other people to talk about them. I have met a number of soldiers who won medals and crosses in the Great War, but not one of them boasted of what he had done. "Oh," they said, "we just did our duty; that was all." That is the way. Just do your duty and don't brag about it.

*II. Samson fought a Lonely Fight.*—He was alone when he met the lion, and there was no one to cheer him in the fight. Cheers are often encouraging. If a fireman risks his life in saving others he may be encouraged by the

onlookers, though he does not rescue the person for the sake of being cheered. When we play cricket or football, and show good play, we are pleased when the crowd expresses its approval by cheering. Young people, some of your biggest fights in life may be lonely ones. Jesus was alone in the wilderness when the devil tempted Him for forty days. Sometimes you may have to fight the lions in your hearts. Passions, desires, motives, selfishness, appetite, may be roaring lions within you. Jesus cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene. What a fight she must have had with the lions in her own heart !

Sometimes men have to fight lonely fights at the post of duty. When Sir Douglas Mawson was in the South Pacific pursuing his work as an explorer he came to the conclusion that it would be of great benefit to Australia and New Zealand if a wireless station were set up on Macquarie Island. Messages could be flashed to Australasia, sending word in advance of the storms coming from the cold regions of the South Pole. So there are two lonely men living in a cabin on that desolate island. Their surroundings are very trying. They have frost, snow and gales, and much of their time is spent in darkness and cut off from the world. But those two men are at their lonely post of duty

so that they may send messages to warn sailors and farmers of the coming bad weather. They live their lonely life of hardship that they may serve the people of Australia and New Zealand.

Scott and his party went down to the South Pole and died their lonely deaths amid the cold and snow, that they might gain knowledge that would be of benefit to the world. In Christ Church, New Zealand, a monument has been erected to the memory of Captain Scott and the lonely fight he fought amid the frost and snow. On it are the following words, taken from his diary, "I do not regret this journey, which shows that Englishmen can endure hardship, help one another, and meet death with as great fortitude as ever in the past." In loneliness and without a cheer he and his companions died whilst doing their duty. We admire them because of the courage they displayed in their lonely fight. Do your duty because it is right, even though you have to do it in loneliness. Cheers or no cheers, do what is right.

*III. It was in the Ordinary Walk of Life that Samson met the Lion.*—He did not go hunting for lions. It was while he was walking along a road that he met the lion. Boys and girls, you do not need to go looking for lions to fight; there are plenty to be found in your daily

path. Some of them may not be very big lions, and may be overcome fairly easily, but if you do not fight them now they may grow to big, strong lions, and you will then find it harder to overcome them. Young lions are much more easily killed than big ones. A rattlesnake when a few days old is about the size of a lead pencil, but it will coil itself round an object and has deadly poison in its fangs of the same kind as the big rattlesnake. If a wise man sees a young rattlesnake in his path he kills it. Kill the enemies of your character while they are little.

*Then Samson, by Killing the Lion, made the Way safer for Others to Travel.*—He was a giant with great strength, and he used it in killing the lion, so that weaker men, women, and children could walk that road with safety. We should be thankful to men who have killed lions for us. Great reformers who have fought great evils have made the path of life safer and more comfortable for us. Social reformers who, like Lord Shaftesbury and many others, have worked hard to make the lot of the workers much better.

*It will give you Pleasure to look back and see the Victories you have Won in the Cause of Right.*—Men who have spent time in hunting find great pleasure in displaying the skins of the

lions and tigers they have killed. They remind them of victorious fights. Later, when Samson walked past the place where he had killed the lion, he saw that the bees had found a home in the carcase, and in it they had deposited their honey. So from the body of the slain lion he got honey. That was the "sweets of victory." So when a man gains a victory over an evil habit he feels happier as he enjoys the fruits of his fight. The drinker who becomes an abstainer finds himself better in his health, the cigarette smoker who gives up smoking and finds he is reaping benefit from his abstinence, and the man who conquers the habit of using bad language, all enjoy the sweets of victory.

All our enemies do not attack us like savage, roaring lions. If they did we should be prepared to meet them ; but sometimes they come upon us very silently and gradually get power over us. In some parts of Southern America there are mountain bats which are called vampires. If a traveller falls asleep, and so spends the night in the open air, he will perhaps waken in the morning feeling feeble and exhausted, and scarcely able to stand upright. He will, perhaps, find one of his feet in a pool of blood. The vampires during the night have bitten him with skill and precaution, so that

he has not felt the punctures, but they have sucked his blood and taken away his strength. So there are habits which, quietly and insidiously, take away our physical and moral strength.

Dr A. A. Martin, in his book, *A Surgeon in Khaki*, tells us that when he was examining recruits for Kitchener's Army, he found among the "weeds" of young men who came to enlist those who were cigarette victims. They had bad hearts as a result of excessive smoking, and so were unfit for active service. The habit of cigarette smoking had gradually taken away their health, until they were worse than they would have been if the vampires had sucked their blood for a night. In the latter case they might not have been to blame, but in the former they had taken away their strength by their own action.

Boys, beware of the deadly cigarette. If you have not begun to smoke, don't begin—if you have begun, give it up at once. The habit will handicap you and make against your success in life. It will help to take the colour out of your cheeks and make you pasty-faced. It may affect your heart and also hinder you in your breathing.

These are some of the lions you may fight. May you be victors.



## XVII

### THE MAN WHO LOVED ENGLAND

“ England, with all thy faults, I love thee still.”—

W. COWPER.

You have read of Rupert Brook, the gifted young soldier poet. He was not only a man of genius, but he had the spirit of a hero. He had a fine, manly presence, and in appearance he was like a royal prince. As a soldier, he had the spirit of a knight of olden times. When the war broke out, he quickly responded to his country's call, believing that England's cause was a righteous one. He had a passionate love for England, and was proud to be an Englishman, so with enthusiasm he became a soldier of King George. He died at the Island of Lemnos, in the Ægean Sea, in April 1915.

In his poems he tells us how dearly he loved his native land. In his famous poem, “The Soldier,” he writes—

“ If I should die, think only this of me :

That there's some corner of a foreign field

That is for ever England. There shall be

In that rich earth a richer dust concealed,

A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware ;  
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,  
A body of England's breathing English air,  
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home."

These lines appear beneath his portrait in Rugby School Chapel. They are splendid. They breathe the spirit of love for England.

Many of our most talented poets have reached the noblest notes of song when they have sung of their native land.

There are some folk who call themselves cosmopolitans, and say they love all countries alike, and none in particular. They think that is being broad-minded and big-hearted. We certainly should love all and hate none. We hope that soon the nations of the earth will be united like a big family, and that wars will be no more. But there are many reasons why we should love our own country best of all. Boys and girls should love all the people in their street or town, but they should love their own home and relatives best of all, especially if their home is a good one.

Now, boys and girls, I want to tell you why you should love England and be proud of the British flag. There are good reasons why, wherever you are, you can lift up your head and proudly say : " I thank God I am a Britisher, and I am proud of the flag, for

“It stands as it has always stood,  
For honour, duty, brotherhood,  
For love and truth and might.”

*We should be Proud of England because it is a Land of Freedom.*—The British flag does not wave over a single slave. Many years ago England paid a large sum of money so that all the slaves in the Empire should be set free. All men are free beneath the flag which waves over our Empire. They are free politically. Men and women can go to the ballot box and elect their rulers. If they do not like their representatives they can refuse to return them to office. They have liberty to elect their city, county and town councillors, and members of other local bodies. Then the colonies and Dominions in various parts of the Empire are free to manage their own affairs. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and other countries have their own Parliaments and make their own laws. So that England is a mother of nations and Parliaments. She does not rule her colonies by the sword, but gives them freedom to rule themselves.

That is why we in New Zealand are loyal to the Mother Land. We have freedom to manage our own affairs. As far as our freedom as a Dominion is concerned we scarcely know that we belong to England. To retain this great

blessing of freedom our soldier boys freely went to fight beneath the British flag in France and on Gallipoli.

Then England is the home of religious freedom. People can worship God as they please. All have liberty of worship. Yes, old England is a land of freedom, and the British people are a freedom-loving people.

Sweet and gentle William Wordsworth wrote :

“ We must be free or die who speak the tongue  
That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold  
which Milton held.”

You may be proud of Britain's roll of heroes. There are thousands of famous and brave men whose names do not appear in Westminster Abbey. Men who have explored every sea and Continent, heroes who have laid down their lives for humanity. Think of the thousands of heroes in the Great War. No less than 569 persons had conferred upon them the Victoria Cross, 35,000 received Military Crosses, and 91,000 Military Medals. What an army of heroes, and there were thousands more entitled to the honours who did not receive them. What a noble army of heroes who fought for freedom !

We love England because she is a Christian country. We know that she has her sins,

for which we mourn. For instance, the drink traffic is a dark blot upon her national life. But there is much that is noble and Christian in England.

There is no country in the world the size of England that has sent so many missionaries to preach the Gospel to the heathen or raised so much money for their support.

No country of her size has done so much to circulate the Scriptures as Great Britain. It is a land of the open Bible, and she sends many million copies of God's Word every year to people in over five hundred languages.

*You may be Proud of England because she Stands for Righteousness.*—What blessings she has conferred upon other nations! British rule in India has conferred many blessings upon the people. By her government of Egypt she has changed the country from a state of bankruptcy to one of prosperity. By her magnanimous treatment of South Africa it has become one of the most loyal parts of the Empire. She stands for justice and mercy. Oppressed people look to England for help, and in the past she has helped them. When the English soldiers entered Palestine the Arabs said, "Everything will be right now; the English will see that we get justice."

England promised to give the Jews a safe

home in the land of their fathers. One of the Jewish leaders, referring to the document in which England made the promise, said, "It is only a scrap of paper, but it is written in English, is signed by the British Government, and therefore is sacred and inviolable. It is true to the finest traditions of the British people to right wrongs, however ancient, and to undo injustice however hoary, and to rule by the true principles of justice and right." Is it not splendid to belong to a nation which is so highly respected by the people of the world?

There are many more reasons why you may be glad you are members of the greatest Empire in the world, and over which the sun never sets. You might be proud of England's wealth, which she has often used in helping poorer nations. You could be proud of the greatness of the British Empire, which is composed of a league of nations loyal to one king. You might justly have in your hearts a feeling of pride as you think of the British constitution which has been a model for other nations, or of the great statesmen, scientists, explorers, scholars, inventors, reformers, philanthropists, preachers, soldiers, sailors, and world leaders which the Empire has produced.

Boys and girls, you have a great heritage,

of which you have a right to be proud. Lift up your heads and look at the flag, and be not ashamed of it, but vow that in the days to come you will do your part, so that it may float over a more righteous people.

## XVIII

### HEROES WITHOUT MEDALS

“ And others.”—HEB. xi. 36.

A NUMBER of English soldiers in France were approaching what seemed to be a large empty house in a field. When they were some distance away they saw a khaki-clad English soldier rush out of the house and run towards them. He had only gone a short distance from the house when a number of shots were fired and he fell dead. The English soldiers took shelter for a time. They afterwards attacked the house and either killed or captured the Germans who had been in possession of it. They had been waiting for the English soldiers to get near to the house, when they would have suddenly shot them down. The English soldier whom they had taken prisoner knew this, and he had rushed out to save the men of his own army even though it meant the loss of his own life. It was a noble thing to do. His identification disc had been taken by the Germans; hence the English soldiers could not identify



him. They buried his body on the top of a neighbouring hill and placed a cross at the head of his grave, writing on it these words, "He saved others, himself he could not save."

I read of a noble deed performed at Gallipoli by an unknown New Zealand soldier. A number of New Zealanders had advanced some distance when they saw one of their own men, who had gone ahead and climbed up to a high ridge, waving his arms as he sent a message to them, then they saw him fall. He had been shot by the Turks. He got up and continued the message, and was shot down again. He rose again, but this time only to his knees. Again the Turks shot him down, but he had finished his message and warned the New Zealanders that the Turks were trying to cut them off. The brave New Zealander saved his comrades but lost his own life. His body could not be recovered, and no one knows who he was. He gave his life for his friends.

*I. Notice that some Heroes are Unknown.*—The daily duties supply opportunities for us to show the spirit of heroes. Thousands of mothers live the lives of heroines. They toil on from early morning till late at night, doing work which never seems finished. There is very little romance about a mother's work. Just washing, cooking, cleaning, mending, baking,

and the many minor duties of the home. All are repeated in the everyday round. Sometimes the children are sick, and mother has to become nurse. At other times she has to struggle to feed and clothe the family on a small income, and yet she smiles through it all and acts like a heroine.

Life is a battle, and man earns his daily bread on the firing line. I have seen notices on tram cars: "Workmen's cars." The car has been crowded with men going to work. They were soldiers of the industrial army going to the battle line to earn the daily bread for themselves and their families. As I have seen the working-man's car crowded with men on their way to work I have felt like taking off my hat and shouting, "Three cheers for the working-man on his way to the firing line of life's daily battle!"

There are many heroes in humble life who are unknown to fame. A farmer may be an everyday hero. A New Zealand farmer was asked by a journalist what work he had done for the community. He expected the farmer would speak about work he had done on public committees, but he replied: "The best work I ever did was to grow forty thousand bushels of wheat on my farm in one year to provide food for my fellowmen." That farmer had

benefited the community more than some men who had received medals.

The baker who for a number of hours each day stands before the big oven baking our bread is doing the work of a hero. It is by the sweat of the baker's brow we eat our bread. As I stood one day upon the deck of a liner cutting her way through the waters of the Red Sea, I saw a man stagger towards the rail and look over the side of the vessel. He had very little clothing on. He was black with dust and grease, and he was in a fainting, exhausted state. He was one of the firemen who had been working in front of the fires below. It was as a result of his work and that of his fellow-workmen that the ship was able to speed on its way.

It was fearfully hot on deck, but I thought "What must it be like down in the stoke hole?" The men required the spirit of heroes to do their work. That fainting stoker was a soldier who had retired from the firing-line while he recovered his strength. King George, when presenting some brave soldiers with medals, said, "There are many more soldiers who are entitled to medals." Yes, there are many who are entitled to medals who never receive them. A coal miner works under difficult and dangerous conditions, and when he has spent many years

of his life down the mine, he ought to be given a medal for rendering useful and heroic service. Many monuments have been erected in honour of warriors and statesmen, but how seldom are any raised to the memory of doctors, yet they often follow their profession surrounded by many dangers.

In one of our New Zealand hospitals there is a brass tablet to the memory of a nurse who died through devotion to her duty. There are many nurses who are living the lives of heroines, and are nobly spending their energies in the path of duty though they never receive a word of praise. Heroines without medals.

*II. Every Person can be a Hero.*—Some men perform great deeds of heroism, and thousands of people sing their praises. Their fame spreads round the world, and sometimes monuments are erected to their memory, but if we cannot all be great heroes of fame we can all live in the spirit of heroes. We can be brave, gentle, chivalrous, and honourable in all our actions, and become true heroes in the daily battle.

There are some men who are unknown *heroes because they gain the victory over themselves*. They have been in the power of some evil habit, and they have asked God to help them, and they are now living sober, respectable lives as conqueror over themselves.

Brave conquerors ! For so you are  
That war against your own affections,  
And the huge army of the world's desires.

Every boy or girl can conquer themselves, and  
in their own heart gain the greatest victory of  
all.

Life is opening out before you,  
Youthful lives so fresh and bright.  
God on high is watching o'er you,  
Be a hero in the fight.  
Stand up bravely for the right,  
Be a hero in the fight.

## XIX

### MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings.”—PROV. xxii. 29.

“With my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies.”—GEN. xxxii. 10.

HAVE you ever climbed a high mountain? Then you know what strength is required and what pleasure you experienced when you reached the top and felt the difficulty overcome. You were able to enjoy the fresh air and also the inspiring view of the country as it stretched before you for many miles. You felt like a victor who was enjoying the fruit of his victory. Now let us remember

*I. We should all be Climbers.*—We should not be content to sit still, but be ambitious to rise in the world, to be somebody. We should resolve to climb and to get there. A boy will never become anything worth while unless he resolves to climb. You need not be discouraged because you commence life in lowly conditions and without those helps which come from social standing. It is not living in a palace which

makes a man great. The immortal Æsop, who wrote fables which have lived through centuries, was a slave. Homer, who wrote the songs of Greece, was a beggar. Demosthenes, her greatest orator, was the son of a cutler, and the great Virgil was the son of a baker. Diogenes, the philosopher, lived in a tub. Luther, the reformer, lived in the miner's cottage of his father. Burns, Scotland's immortal bard, was reared in a white-washed cottage.

A multitude of the world's greatest men have come from cottages. Ben Jonson the author, Butler the theologian, Arkwright and Stephenson the inventors, Carey the missionary, Abraham Lincoln and James Garfield, Presidents of America, all came from cottages. These names are sufficient to show that amongst the poor and lowly there are great men. In many of the English villages some humble Hampden has been the soul of the community.

The cottages have produced great men, and humble and difficult surroundings need not hinder your rising in the world. David Livingstone, the great explorer and missionary, was born poor, and at ten years of age was working in a spinning factory. Lloyd Garrison was poor and friendless and in mean surroundings when he began his work for the freedom of the slaves. Think of the youthful Joseph a slave

in Potiphar's house and afterwards cast unjustly into an Egyptian prison, but he looked up and continued to climb until he was Prime Minister of the Egyptian nation. Look at Daniel, a captive youth in Babylon. He might have said, "There is no chance for a captive Hebrew to rise in an enemy's land," but he looked up and continued to climb until he was next to the king in honour and power, and was Premier of the Persian empire.

Think of Charles Lamb's struggle up the mountain of literary fame. His parents wished him to become a minister of the Anglican Church, but he was a stammerer, and at fourteen years of age he left school and became a clerk in the office of the East India Company, where he remained for more than thirty years. Though he spent his days in a dull office as drudgery clerk, at night he spent his hours among his books or studying the life of London, and in writing his immortal essays. He climbed the mountain in his spare time, and it took him many years to reach the top. His sister Mary assisted him in his work and so helped him to climb.

Many men as they have tried to climb mountains have been helped by their sisters or their wives. Nathaniel Hawthorne was dismissed from the office where he had been employed. Heartbroken he went to his humble home and



told his wife. She placed pen, ink, and paper by his side and said, "You will have time to write your book." Thus cheered by his wife he wrote the book which made him famous.

*II. We should Begin to Climb when Young.*—Youth is the time to climb. You do not expect old people to climb to the top of the highest mountain peaks in the world. It is the young men who are the best climbers. Begin to climb early. George Washington, whose name stands first in America's history, when thirteen years of age, wrote one hundred and ten maxims for his personal guidance in good behaviour. At eighteen he was a surveyor, at nineteen he was a major, and at twenty-two he commanded a regiment.

Alexander the Great as a boy was a diligent student in the school of Aristotle and other great teachers. At eighteen he won his first battle, and at twenty he was King of Macedon. Napoleon was studying military tactics at ten years of age, and at sixteen he was a sub-lieutenant. Demosthenes, when a boy, vowed he would become a public speaker, and at twenty-five he was Greece's greatest orator.

Daniel Webster was so sickly as a boy that few thought he would live. One day, when he was ten years of age, his father said to him, "Improve your opportunities, and when I am

gone you will not need to go through the hardships I have undergone." Daniel sobbed aloud a vow that he would work hard. At fifteen years of age he had read six books of Virgil. At eighteen he delivered his famous Fourth of July oration, and at twenty he was famed as a lawyer, orator, and statesman.

William Wilberforce began his fight against slavery before he was sixteen, and he was a member of Parliament before he was twenty-one years of age. William Pitt, at nine years of age, had begun to think of being a member of Parliament, and at twenty-one he had taken his seat at Westminster. William Ewart Gladstone, England's Grand Old Man, was a member of the House of Commons at twenty-three.

Sir Isaac Newton very early began those studies which made him famous. When in his 'teens he invented a clock that ran by water power, a windmill which ground wheat into flour. At twenty-three he saw the apple fall which led him into a course of study which resulted in his discovery of the laws of gravitation.

When Pascal was eight years of age, with a piece of charcoal he solved geometrical problems upon the floor of his mother's kitchen. Sir Humphry Davy became a diligent student of natural philosophy when a boy, and made many of his discoveries in chemistry when quite a

young man. Galileo, who invented the telescope, spent his boyhood in discovery and research. Sir W. R. Hamilton had learned thirteen different languages when he was thirteen years of age. M'Cormick constructed with his own hands his first harvest reaper before he was twenty-two.

Millions of women ought to be thankful to Elias Howe, who gave to the world the first sewing machine before he was twenty-six years of age. At the same age Dr Thomas Morton had discovered the use of ether as an anæsthetic. At twenty-three Thomas A. Edison had made his first discovery in telegraphy. At fourteen years of age Robert Fulton, the inventor of steam navigation, had constructed paddle wheels for a fishing boat. Samuel Compton invented the spinning machine at twenty-one years of age. Edward Gibbon, the historian, began his work at seventeen. Victor Hugo began writing poems and novels while yet in his 'teens.

I could give you a long list of poets, preachers, musicians, and writers who began to climb when young. Begin early to climb and remember what has been done can be done again.

*III. Climb in God's Strength.*—The Psalmist said, "I will look up to the hills from whence cometh my help." As you climb look up and not down. Seek for Divine strength. Give yourself to God and let Him take you by the hand

and help you to climb. When Wendell Phillips, the famous statesman, was fourteen years of age, he heard Dr Lyman Beecher preach on the theme, "You belong to God," and he went home, and in his room he prayed, "O God, I belong to Thee; take what is Thine own," and from that day he climbed in the strength of God.

## XX

### THE BOY WHO NEVER REACHED THE TOP

“Every man according to his several ability.”—MATT. xxv. 15.

THE boy I wish to talk to you about is the one who never reached the top and yet was never found at the bottom. He was just an average, ordinary boy. In the school examinations he was never at the top of his class, but he passed the sixth standard and gained a proficiency certificate. He left school and went to work at an ordinary occupation in a factory, and in honest toil he earned his daily bread.

Though he was a member of a cricket team he was never elected captain, but he was looked upon as a “safe bat,” and more than once when a “procession” had set in, he went to the wickets and began a “stone wall” which saved his side from defeat. His courage and doggedness won the game. After the captain had tried his best bowlers who knew all the points of the game, and they could not get any wickets, the ordinary boy was put on, and he bowled every ball at the

middle stump, and was not long before he took several wickets. The brilliant players of the team said in a superior manner, "He's not half a bad sort, and it would not be safe to leave him out of the team; he always does best when he is most needed." Now, while this boy was not brilliant and did not take the lead, he always gave satisfaction in a second, third or lower place, and he had certainly qualities which made him respected by his companions.

*I. He never Gave Up.*—He was dogged and determined, and he would never give up. He would not own that he was beaten. He possessed the ability to stick at it. He had "stick-ability." Brilliant boys of genius might do their work quicker, but he worked on until he almost came up with them. At the school sports he was always one of the winners of the long-distance race, and it was in the last quarter of the mile that he came to the front and got second place. He won by holding on.

Boys, you may not have great abilities, but you can practise the quality of holding on. Don't be a "quitter," a boy who easily gives up. It is doggedness which often wins the fight. One writer has said that history shows that the English often lose their first battles, but there is one they always win, and that is the last one. This is a tribute to the doggedness of the British

character. Stick at it. "Stick it" wins. The race is won in the last lap. Many games have been won during the last few minutes of play.

*II. The Ordinary Boy can be Brave.*—He can bravely do his duty in the daily battle of life. He can keep his end up. He can do his bit. That was what First Class Boy J. F. Rogers, of the "Tiger," did in the North Sea battle, when the German ship, the "Blucher," was sunk. One of the glasses of the gun-sighting apparatus had become clouded, and the gunners were hindered in their work. Boy Rogers volunteered to clean the glass. He climbed on top of the turret while the ship was going more than thirty knots an hour and the enemy's fire was concentrated upon her. All through the battle he sat there wiping the glass. The big 13.5 in. guns were roaring and belching out their shots at the enemy every minute. The men were protected behind armour-plate, but Boy Rogers was exposed to the enemy's gun-fire.

When the fight was over, the men came out from behind their covering. They had forgotten the first-class boy until they looked up and saw him still cleaning those precious gun-sights, or, as he said, "wiping the 'Tiger's' eye." Admiral Beatty mentioned Boy Rogers in his despatches, and he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He was just an

ordinary boy of sixteen, who had recently joined the Navy, but he bravely did a bit of necessary work and helped to win the battle.

*III. The Ordinary Boy can Work.*—Hard work sometimes wins where genius fails. Unused talents rust. Talents increase by use. The man of the parable was not condemned because he had only one talent, but because he did not use it. John Wesley was a man of great ability, but he would never have done his great work had he not used his talents. He rose at four o'clock summer and winter, preached twice daily for fifty years, and rode 270,000 miles during his life, and there were no motor-cars in his day. He walked, rode on horseback or in coaches.

It cost Adam Clarke forty years of hard work to prepare his great Commentary. Noah Webster worked upon his dictionary for forty years and travelled thousands of miles on land and sea in search of material. It took Gibbon twenty years to write his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Sir Isaac Newton said, "Whatever service I have done the public was not owing to any extraordinary sagacity, but solely to industry and patient thought." Thomas A. Edison works eighteen to twenty hours a day, and has "an infinite capacity for taking pains."

Boys, hard work wins. Take your coat off,



roll up your sleeves and work hard, and if you do not get to the top of the mountain you will get a good way up the side. You will be better for having tried to reach the top, though you only get halfway up.

The majority of people live ordinary but useful lives. In our cities there are rows of houses exactly alike, yet all the houses are equally useful. We can all be useful, reliable, trustworthy, and serve God in the ordinary walk of life as carpenters, weavers, tailors, grocers, factory hands, road-menders, pitmen, dustmen, etc. If we cannot be generals, we can be privates. If not great leaders, we can be reliable followers. If not masters, we can be trustworthy servants. By doing ordinary work we may make it possible for someone else to do extraordinary work. I do not think Jonathan would have won his great fight had it not been for the help rendered him by his armour-bearer.

Great explorers could never have made their great discoveries had it not been for the help of the ordinary members of their party. In a ploughed field all the furrows seem the same, but if one or two were left out there would be a line down the field without any wheat or oats. In the factory the seamstress uses her sewing machine day after day doing the same ordinary work, but if she misses a few stitches the work is spoiled.

Each stitch is needed to make the work complete. Many duties have to be performed by ordinary people, but they are necessary. How we should miss them if they were left undone. How things would collapse if the ordinary work was not done.

Do what you can, being what you are.  
Shine like a glow-worm if you cannot be a star.  
Work like a pulley if you cannot as a crane,  
Be a wheel greaser if you cannot drive a train.

*IV. Remember that God Loves the Ordinary Boy.*—He may not be a genius, but God cares for him. He knows every boy. He says that not even a sparrow shall fall to the ground without His notice, and that the hairs upon our head are numbered. Everyone of you can say, "Thou God seest me." We are not lost in the crowd. Then Jesus died for the ordinary boy or girl. The Bible tells us that the common people heard Jesus gladly. He had His best friends among the common people, and I believe that to-day He has some of His very best followers among ordinary unknown people. He has devout disciples in little cottages.

Remember, too, that in some things the ordinary boy and the boy of brilliant gifts are equal. Both enjoy the same sunshine, breathe the same atmosphere, pray to the same God, can

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be saved by the same Saviour, and both must die and stand at the same Judgment Seat.

We have not wings, we cannot soar ;  
But we have feet to scale and climb,  
By slow degrees, by more and more,  
The cloudy summit of our time.

## XXI

### THE GREATNESS OF TRIFLES

“And the man said, They are departed hence ; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.”—GEN. xxxvii. 17.

JOSEPH was sent by his father to see how his brethren fared. He expected to find them in a field not far from home, but he was informed by a man that they had gone to Dothan, and he had to follow them. Their being in another field made all the difference in Joseph's future life. Had his brethren been near their father's home they would not have dared to have attempted to either kill or sell Joseph. Their being in a distant field led to the great changes in his life. When Joseph left home that morning he little thought that he was starting on his way to Egypt, and that he would be Prime Minister of that country before he again saw his father ; but so it was. That little trifle changed the course of his life.

Saul, the son of Kish, was sent to look for his father's asses. Probably the asses had been lost before, and no doubt he had previously searched

for them, but that day's search for the asses was the greatest event in Saul's life. He went to look for his father's asses and found a king's crown instead. The prophet Samuel anointed him as the future King of Israel. A Samaritan woman, as part of her daily work, went to draw water at Sychar's well. She found a stranger there, conversed with him, and her heart was changed. She became a new woman, but she never forgot the day when she went to draw water and met the Messiah.

Little thought Samaria's daughter  
On that ne'er forgotten day,  
That the tender Shepherd sought her  
As a sheep astray,  
That from sin He longed to win her  
Knowing more than she could tell  
Of the wretchedness within her  
Waiting at the well.

So the little ordinary events of life may be filled with importance. A conversation with a stranger may lead to the forming of a life friendship. A visit to a neighbouring town may turn the course of a person's life.

*Small Events sometimes Affect Nations.*—Little things have led to wars. When I stood in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, I remembered the statement I had seen that a quarrel between the pilgrims in that church had

led to the Crimean War. The destruction of tea in Boston Harbour led to the war between America and England, which resulted in America becoming an independent nation. It was the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand which led to the great European war. These events were small compared to the results springing from them. Of course there were other things behind them, but these little things were the last incidents which gave excuses for the wars.

Wars have been averted by little events. Probably no European had ever a greater influence in China than Sir Robert Hart. Hearing that a friend of his was to preach in a certain church in Peking he determined to attend the service. He noticed a certain high official was absent. Sir Robert went to the man's house to see what was wrong, and he found him signing a document. "That means war with a certain European Power," said the official. Sir Robert reasoned with him, and as the result of that long conversation the document was not sent, and probably war was averted. Said Sir Robert, "I believe I was led by God to that church, and to that official's house that day."

How much depends upon seemingly trivial and unimportant things. This being so, we

should never let what seem to be little opportunities of doing good pass by unused. Jesus used even the seeming little opportunities. He preached some of His best sermons to the smallest congregations. To Nicodemus He preached that discourse in the third chapter of John, and that wonderful sermon of His in the following chapter was preached to a Samaritan woman by the well side. Martin Tupper, in his *Proverbial Philosophy*, says—

“Despise not thou a small thing, for evil or for good,  
For a look may work thy ruin or a word create thy wealth,  
The walking this way or that, the casual stopping or hastening  
Hath saved life, and destroyed it, hath cast down and built up fortunes,  
Commit thy trifles unto God, for to Him is nothing trivial,  
And it is but the littleness of man that seeth no greatness in a trifle.”

The selling of Joseph into Egypt as a slave led to his saving the nation in the time of famine.

*There is scarcely Anything in our Lives which can be called Little.*—The least incident may contain the germs of great possibilities. Carefully look for the hand of God in little things, and in

the least tasks of life seek to serve Him. John Wesley and his companions sought to serve God by forming the "Holy Club." It was formed as a means of grace for the members, and yet it was the first step along which Wesley was unconsciously led to the founding of the Methodist Church. When Dr Cooke, the Methodist Missionary, was blown out of his course and landed at the West Indies, it seemed as though it was a misfortune, yet it led to the establishment of Methodism in that part of the world. When the seven wise men of Preston met and signed the total abstinence pledge it seemed a little thing. They were poor and unknown, but they laid the foundation of the total abstinence movement. So from some little deed which seems unimportant, great good may come to you and many others. A word you speak may affect a life. A kindness shown may be a seed sown which will bring forth an increase of good deeds in days to come.

Have you ever thought what a little thing it seemed to the people that a Babe was born in Bethlehem? Only a little baby, like thousands of other babies. Born in a stable, and its reputed parents were poor people. Yet the birth of that Baby was the greatest event in the world's history. That Baby Boy is saving the world. He became a man, and as Jesus He died on



Calvary for the world's sin. Remember that Jesus the Boy is the friend of all boys and girls, and young men and women, He will help and guide them in both the little and the great events of life.

## XXII

### LITTLE GIANTS

“Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small  
a fire.”—JAMES iii. 5.

*Our Lives are Greatly Affected by Little Things.*—Our comfort depends upon them. Suppose we had no lucifer matches and we had to go back to the old methods of securing a light or making a fire. Suppose we had no pins or needles, how inconvenient it would be. From little things great ones are continually coming. From the little seed there grew the mighty kauri tree, the giant of the New Zealand bush, and from the acorn came the sturdy oak tree. The soaring eagle, the monarch of the air, came from the egg hatched in the nest.

The great river which is so wide and deep that ocean-going vessels can safely steam upon its waters commenced at a little spring among the hills. The ocean is made up of drops of water. Our life depends upon the raindrops. If we have no rain for a few months we become anxious and pray for rain. The earth is made up of atoms. Well may we sing—

“ Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean  
And the beauteous land.”

Great discoveries have been made as the result of slight accidents. What a blessing is the wonderful Röntgen rays, and yet the discovery was made accidentally by Professor Röntgen, who placed a key inside a book that was near to a Crookes tube through which a current of electricity was sent. There happened to be a photographic plate under the key, and when the professor tried to use the plate he found the print of a door key upon it. Accidentally he had discovered the principle of the X-ray which has proved such a blessing to suffering humanity.

*Little Things are sometimes very Great in Power.*—A few years ago I sailed up the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. The scenery was delightful. A panorama of beauty spread before me. There were small islands in the harbour with forts upon them. On each side there were mountains, some of them with sharp peaks and others cone-shaped. As the sun rose the waters of the harbour seemed many-coloured. Before me was the city with its thousands of beautiful white buildings glistening in the morning sunlight; behind the city rose the hills, presenting a lovely background.

Well might Amerigo Vespucci, when, some centuries ago, he stepped on the shore, exclaim : " If there be a terrestrial paradise anywhere it cannot be situated very far from this place." Yet until a few years ago the city in certain parts of the year was very unhealthy. In fifty years over 60,000 people died of yellow fever. During the hottest and unhealthiest season the well-to-do families migrated to the hills. Strangers were afraid of visiting the city during the summer months.

Some years ago the Brazilian Government voted £300,000 for research work, and in 1903 Dr Oswald Cruz discovered that the disease was spread by an insect which lived upon stagnant pools of water. The insect flew until it found a human being, settled upon him and then bit him. The insect was small and the bite was ever so little, but it introduced the germ of the disease into man's body. A great crusade was commenced. An army of men swarmed over the country, stagnant pools were dried up, roofs and spoutings were cleaned, the city was made more sanitary, and the following year deaths from yellow fever in Rio de Janeiro dropped from over 1000 a year to 548, the following year to 48, and the year after that to 42. Those terrible little insects had been killing over a thousand people a year in Rio for over fifty years. They

were little, but they were as mighty as a regiment of soldiers.

Ferdinand de Lesseps became famous through his work in making the Suez Canal, and passengers on ships passing out of the Mediterranean Sea into the canal pass a large monument raised to the memory of the great engineer. But though he succeeded with the Suez Canal he failed in his great engineering effort to make the Panama Canal. The district was so unhealthy and so many of the workmen died that the undertaking was given up. Science later discovered that sickness and death were caused by the bite of the mosquito, and that de Lesseps was defeated by a very little thing. When the American Government decided to construct the canal they first destroyed the dangerous insects.

In Africa for many years men have suffered from a sleeping sickness. Hundreds of thousands of sufferers have slept to death. It is an awful disease, and it has killed off almost all the people in some districts. Science has discovered that the disease is introduced into man's system by the sting of a fly. Only a bite by a little insect, but it means death.

How often we ignore and even despise the little things, yet they may contain the germ of failure. It was only a wrong thought which

came to the young man for a few seconds and passed on, but he remembered it and called it back again, and it grew until that evil thought became a controlling power. The thought became a temptation, and the young man fell into sin. He lost his character through the cultivation of the evil thought which was small at the beginning.

The boy began stealing little things which were of little value, and he was so very cautious that he was not detected. The habit grew so that when he became a man he was an habitual thief, and he was caught and sent to prison. Beware of small sins such as pride, envy, vanity, and jealousy. By speaking a thoughtless word and circulating a false report much harm may be done. A servant girl saw an unusual number of persons in a New York bank, and she told her friends that the bank was unsound, and the people were withdrawing their deposits. The report spread, and for several days long rows of depositors were waiting to withdraw their money. The people the girl saw in the bank were there to get their cheques, as it was the day on which the bank was paying dividends. A run on a bank was started by a servant girl's foolish words.

*Think of the Pleasure which comes to us through Little Things.*—You like honey, but have you

ever thought of the amount of labour a pound of clover honey represents? It means that the bees must take the nectar from sixty-two thousand clover blossoms, and to do this the bees have to make two million seven hundred and fifty thousand visits to the blossoms. As they sometimes fly two or three miles each visit, you will see what a large amount of labour it means for the busy bees to be able to give you a pound of honey. All these bees working to give you the pleasure of enjoying the sweet honey. Do not the bees teach us the lesson that by very little deeds we can bring sweetness into lives? We can do something which will bring gladness and joy into the life of someone. Even a word may affect a person's life for good and bring lasting joy into his heart.

A Welsh preacher saw a girl who worked at the village inn drawing water from a well. He asked her to pray these words every time she came to the well: "Give me the living water that I thirst not." When the minister visited the village a year later he asked the landlady where the girl was. She replied: "Oh, she became changed and used to talk religion to the customers. We should have lost all our business if she had remained." They did not want a converted girl for a barmaid. The girl became

changed through a word fitly spoken. What a power is our little tongue. What a little giant it is. Use your little giants for good and not evil. Little by little we can drive out the good or build up the bad.



## XXIII

### THE WONDERS OF THE UNSEEN

“The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—2 COR. iv. 18.

HAVE you heard of the manless ship? It is a wonderful invention. A torpedo ship can be sent out to sea without any human beings on board. It can be managed by the power of wireless from shore for a distance of about twenty-eight miles. Then an aeroplane can control it from above; it can be directed until it gets near to an enemy ship. By the pressing of a button by wireless, a torpedo is launched, which may sink a ship. If the torpedo fails, then the torpedo ship, which will be charged with explosives, may be sent against the enemy ship, and explode. The torpedo ship may also be controlled by the wireless installation of a battleship. How wonderful it is to see a ship with no passengers or crew on board, yet ploughing its way across the sea, or turning round and coming back towards the shore after it has done its work.

We are surrounded by many wonderful powers,

which we cannot see. Man has knocked at the doors of the universe, and some of them have been opened to him, but though Nature may have revealed many of her secrets, there are doubtless many yet unrevealed. I am glad I did not live in what is called "the good old times," but that I am on this planet just now, and my only regret is that I can't come back in a few hundred years and see what further discoveries have been made. Perhaps the inhabitants of heaven know what progress is being made on earth.

*I. The Unseen Powers of this World are the Greatest.*—Think of being able to flash a message thousands of miles through space. I may be standing on a hill; there may not be a cloud or any object to be seen between the earth and the sky, and yet messages may be flashing past me on their way to some distant land. Two persons may be talking over my head to each other. A wireless message can be sent from England to New Zealand. By an unseen power men may speak to each other round the earth. That is a wonderful power.

Think what wonders have been accomplished by the unseen power of electricity. In hundreds of ways we are being benefited by it. Our streets and houses are lit up by it. We ride in trains, trams and ships which are driven by its power.

We speak to our friends through the telephone, or send them a telegram by its use. We drive machinery, or even cook our food by its help, and yet we cannot see electricity. No man has ever seen it. We cannot see the air we breathe. Our life depends upon that which is invisible. We can see smoke, clouds, mists, vapours, but we cannot see the pure air. It is composed of unseen gases, which are so perfectly and wonderfully blended together by the God of Nature that they give continued life to us. Truly in God we live and breathe, and have our being. We live upon the unseen.

Think of the wonderful power of gravitation, by which all the planets are held in their place. We cannot see this power. We do not even feel it, yet we are controlled by it. Our world is held in its place among the worlds of the universe by this mysterious unseen power, and even as I walk, each step I take is affected by it. Except for this power I could not keep my footing on the earth, but would float into the air. It is this power which saves the world from disorder and disaster. Think, too, of that wonderful magnetic power emanating from the Poles, which affects the ship's compass so that the needle points almost due north, and the navigator is able to steer his course with certainty. Through all these wonderful and unseen powers God works

in the universe. "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power."

We are surrounded by unseen dangers. There is often death in the air. Disease germs are floating about, and men are struck down by an unseen enemy. The Bible speaks about the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday. The terror by night and the arrow that flieth by day. Yes, night and day there are enemies in the air about us. At sea there are unseen currents which may carry ships to destruction, and minerals on shore may affect the compass needle on the ship.

We sometimes think that the things we see are the greatest and the most real, and how men struggle after the things they can see. They buy a house and land, they bank notes and sovereigns, they live in beautiful houses and wear gay clothing, and they say these are the real things; God says, as He said to the rich man, "Thou fool."

*II. The Parts of Man we cannot See are the Most Real and the Most Wonderful.*—We can see each other's bodies, but they are only coverings of the real boy or girl, or man or woman. The body is the house in which the man lives. You cannot see your own brain, or the power which controls the actions of your body. You move

your arms and legs at the command of your mind, so that your mind, which you cannot see, is greater than your body, which you can see. As I write this article my fingers are controlled by the mind, which has first conceived the thoughts that I am placing on paper. What a wonderful thing is thought. A mighty unseen power. It can travel thousands of miles in a moment. Our thoughts affect our lives—how necessary it is that we should have right thoughts—pure and good.

Then think what a wonderful thing is memory—yet it cannot be seen. I think back a few moments and there comes before me things which happened last week. I think further back and I remember things which happened forty years ago. I committed to memory recitations when a boy, and I still remember them. I went to England a few years ago, and as I sat on a hill overlooking my native village, memories of the past crowded upon me until tears of pleasure came to my eyes. If memory is such a wonderful unseen storehouse, from which we can draw at any moment, how necessary it is that it should be stored with the very best things. My memory is a picture show—the film of the past brings pictures before me. A man with a good memory can always have a picture show of his own.

No man has seen the human conscience, yet what a wonderful thing it is. If we do wrong it condemns us, and we feel unhappy. If we do right it commends us, and we feel happy.

Love dwells in the human heart, but no man has ever seen it. Though unseen it is the greatest power in the world. You boys and girls know what love is—you love your father and mother, your brother and sister, and your companions. Yet you never saw love. You can't handle it. Yet love is real. It makes life worth living. It is the foundation of human happiness. Love is a bit of heaven on earth. It is a bit of God in man. God is love and all pure love is of God.

Influence is unseen, yet real. You cannot weigh it by the pound or measure it with a yard stick. You cannot handle it or feel it as a substance, but it is none the less real. We all possess this great unseen power. It is sometimes spoken of as personal magnetism or personality. Never mind the name or explanation, accept it as a fact, that for good or ill in varying degree, we all possess this unseen power. The poet had this in mind when he wrote—

Be noble ; and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own.

This unseen power which you possess may inspire and cheer others. It has been said that Napoleon's presence in the French Army was worth 40,000 men.

*III. Spiritual Things, though Unseen, are the Most Real.*—The Holy Spirit cannot be seen. Yet we can feel His power in our hearts. He produces conviction of sin. He leads us to the Cross of Jesus, and brings about conversion. When we pray to God He leads us in our devotions, and in prayer the unseen Spirit links us with the Unseen God. In prayer a man feels a power he cannot see. A man has a soul, but no man has ever seen a soul. Yet it is the man within the house, when the body is dead, the soul will live for ever, and the unseen Holy Spirit leads the unseen soul to the mercy seat where pardon is found.

*God is Unseen.* — No man hath seen God at any time. Yet He rules this universe. He created these worlds and upholds all things by the word of His power. It is said of Abraham that he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

*Heaven is unseen,* but it is real. It is the home of the good. Like Abraham we look for a city whose builder and maker is God. It is eternal, and we shall live there for ever.

Young People, as you pass along the journey of life, remember that the unseen things are the most wonderful and most real, and that we should live for the unseen more than for the seen.



## XXIV

### RADIATORS

RADIATORS are intended to warm rooms and give pleasure to people in them. There are hot-water, steam, gas and electric radiators. Some of them are small and warm offices, and so enable persons to do their work with greater comfort. There are big radiators like those that warm the churches in winter, so that the members of the congregation are warm and comfortable during the service. Radiators are very useful, and are not simply ornamental, though some of them are of very pleasing designs.

*I. A Radiator sends forth Heat with which it has been Supplied.*—If it is a hot-water or steam radiator, there is a fire in some other part of the building which heats the water. If it is a gas radiator, the gas has been brought in pipes from the gas works. The radiators have secured their heat from some source beyond themselves. Even the coal which made the fire and gas received its heat from the sun—the world's great radiator. Suppose you walk out into the fields some morning, and just when you see the sun

showing his face over the eastern hills, say, "Good morning, Great Radiator; I am glad to see you this morning, with your light and warmth you do us all good. We could not do without you."

We can imagine the sun smiling a very broad smile and saying, "Yes, I am the Great Radiator, and it is quite true that you could not live without me. I give you light, for without me you would always be in darkness. The moon shines at night, reflecting the light I give her. The coal which makes the fire in your dwellings is only giving out the heat I put into it many years ago. Your fires are made from some of my bottled-up sunshine. I warm the earth and make the grass, corn, and fruit to grow. I give the flowers their colours and I paint the rosy cheeks upon the apples. I give light and life, for without me all the people of the earth would soon be dead. When you see me go out of sight this evening over the western hills I shall be going to radiate another part of the earth. I am always doing the work which God appointed me when He created this world. Good morning! I must be rising higher and higher, so that I can remove all the fogs and mists and warm the people in the valleys." So each day the Great Radiator will continue doing his work as long as this world shall last.

Now just as the sun is the great radiator from which all the other radiators are supplied with heat, so Jesus is the sun of righteousness who supplies good people with spiritual light and warmth. They are Christ's radiators. When you see preachers, philanthropists, reformers, and lovers of mankind working for the good of humanity, you will know that they are God's radiators. When Moses had been with God on the mount for forty days and came back among the people, his face shone with such a wonderful light that the people could not look upon it, and he had to cover his face with a veil. He was reflecting God's glory. He was one of God's radiators.

When Stephen's enemies were stoning him to death they saw his face shining like that of an angel's. God's love and power were in his heart, so that he was one of His radiators. Paul said that Christ dwelt within him. That was why Paul did such a wonderful work for God as a missionary in Europe and Asia. All missionaries have been radiators, and have gone to the dark places of the earth so that they could light them up with gospel light. Jesus warms the hearts of His followers and then sends them forth as radiators for Him. After He had spoken to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, they said, "Was not our heart burning within us while He

spoke to us in the way?" and immediately they went back to Jerusalem to bear witness and face danger for Jesus.

*II. We can all be Human Radiators.*—We can be joy-makers and not joy-killers. Kill-joys are like clouds which cover up the sun and stop it from shining. They take brightness out of life. They are human refrigerators and freeze up springs of joy. They chill people to the heart and turn them cold. Refrigerators are just the opposite to radiators. Try and be bottled-up sunshine, so that when you are in company you can just draw the cork and let the sunshine stream out. There are some people who make you feel sunny, even on a dull or wet day.

Sometimes you will hear a man ask a number of men the question, "Are we down-hearted?" And they will shout the reply, "No!" The man who asked the question was trying to cheer up the others. During the War our soldiers tried to cheer each other by singing, "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile!" They cheered each other with a song. Some people will sing a happy song until we feel as happy as the singer.

I like to hear a boy whistle because I know it is his way of being a radiator. I like a boy who has a good, hearty laugh. A laughing boy is

always popular. His laugh attracts boys to him. It is catching. When he laughs they laugh with him. He is a laughter-maker. His smiling face radiates human sunshine, and he makes others happy. They in turn become radiators.

R. L. Stevenson said, "A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note, and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted." There is a chance for you boys and girls to give more pleasure than five-pound notes. I like to see pictures of Father Christmas, because he is always represented as an old man with a long white beard, rosy cheeks, a smiling face and twinkling eyes, and carrying a load of presents upon his back. A real radiator of happiness! You can be smile-makers. You can visit sick companions and take them little presents and speak cheery words to them. They will feel quite happy when they know that while they are sick they are not forgotten.

*III. What Kind of Radiator will you be?*—I have sometimes stood by the side of a gorse fence on a hot day, and have heard a crackling noise. It was the pods of the gorse bursting open and scattering the seeds with such force that some of them went yards before they fell on the ground. By and by they would take root and

there would spring up prickly gorse seed. So can you send out seeds of love and cheerfulness. To radiate sweetness you must have a pure heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," and they shall radiate the sweetness and brightness which come from Him. If boys and girls are sulky or spiteful, or bad-tempered and quarrelsome, selfish and jealous, they are bad radiators. Let your prayer be: "Lord, make me one of Thy radiators of joy and happiness."

## XXV

### GOOD AND BAD DREAMS

“ I dreamed a dream.”—JUDGES vii. 13.

THE Bible is quite a dream book. In connection with the birth of Christ, Joseph, his reputed father, had five dreams. Paul had a dream in which a man invited him over to Macedonia to help them. Peter had a dream in which he was instructed to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Pilate's wife had a dream concerning the innocence of Jesus. In the Old Testament kings and prophets had dreams in which God spoke to them.

I do not think that we ought to attach importance to many of our dreams. Some of them are bad dreams, and spring from late suppers and indigestion, and we are glad they are not true. There is no doubt but that God has often spoken to man in dreams. He thus spoke to Samuel, Ezekiel, Job, Daniel, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar and others, to whom in ancient days He wished to make known His will.

*I. Men have both Good and Bad Dreams.*—The Germans had a bad dream. They dreamt that

they were superior to the rest of the world, and that their "kultur" was greater than that of any other nation. Their motto was, "Germany over all." They dreamt of the day when they would rule the world. Let us hope that they have discovered that they were suffering from a bad dream.

Kings and rulers sometimes have bad dreams. Napoleon had a bad dream when he dreamt that he would place the crown of Europe upon his brow. He did not care how much blood he shed or what sorrow he caused as long as his dream came true. He died a prisoner on the island of St Helena, defeated and disgraced, and so ended his bad dream. Sometimes we have bad dreams, and we are glad when we wake up to find they are not true. Thus it is best for some men's bad dreams not to become realities.

Kings and rulers sometimes have good dreams. In America, Presidents like Abraham Lincoln, who set the slaves free, have had good dreams.

No man's life was affected more by dreams than that of Joseph. When a youth he dreamt that the sheaves of his brethren bowed down before his sheaf, and in a second dream he saw the sun and the moon and eleven stars make obeisance unto him. He believed that God had spoken to him and that he was to occupy some



high position in the years to come. His dreams were an inspiration to him. Even when in prison and inclined to be down-hearted he could often remember his dreams. It was through interpreting the dreams of his fellow prisoners that he was brought before the notice of Pharaoh, and it was by explaining the dreams of Pharaoh that he was made Prime Minister of Egypt, and so became the saviour of the country.

*II. A Dreamer can Best Understand Other People's Dreams.*—Joseph the dreamer could understand the dreams of the butler, the baker, and of Pharaoh. Daniel, the man of visions, could explain the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar. Joseph's brethren could not fully understand Joseph, the dreamer. They thought his dreams meant that they would have to serve him, and so they were jealous and hated him.

The world's dreamers have often been misunderstood. They have sometimes been looked upon as being mad. I was born near beautiful Chatsworth, the seat of the Duke of Devonshire. Henry of Cavendish was the great-grandson of the first Duke of Devonshire, and, though the House of Cavendish has produced some great men, who have been empire-builders, none of them have been greater than this great man of science, who spent a fortune in discovering how to obtain oxygen and nitrogen gases. The

work of this so-called "rich madman" is now appreciated.

Galileo was one of the first to state that the world moved, and he was persecuted, being rewarded for his labours by being cast into prison. Palissy, who re-discovered the lost art of enamelling china, spent years upon experiments. He became so poor that he had to burn the furniture in his house to feed the fires of his furnace, and men thought he must surely be mad. But when his dream came true they changed their opinions.

Reformers have been dreamers, and the world has often branded them as madmen. The men who have fought great evils like slavery, the liquor trade, war, etc., have been branded as mad dreamers. The unthinking crowd never understand the dreamers, but other dreamers—men of vision—are able to understand them. The crowd does not dream.

*III. The Great Dreamers have enriched the World by their Vision and Discoveries.*—Michael Faraday, Sir Humphry Davy, Sir William Crookes, Professor Pasteur, Josiah Wedgwood, Palissy, George Stephenson—all these were great dreamers. They spent their time studying subjects which many thought worthless, yet they have enriched the world by their knowledge. These men, who at the time were classed as

foolish dreamers, are remembered as the world's benefactors.

The early settlers who came out to New Zealand were great dreamers. They dreamt about a new land with a more genial climate, and in which there was a better prospect of material success than in Great Britain. So they sailed across the seas to this far distant land. For some of them it meant a journey of three or four months, but their dream cheered them and they travelled on. We are enjoying the benefit of their dreams and work. The men of the "Mayflower" were brave dreamers and they enriched the world by their dream.

The dreamer looks beyond the present time. He sees what may happen when his dream is realised. The painter dreams his beautiful picture before he paints it. The architect dreams of the beautiful building to be erected, and men are delighted with the result of his dream. You boys and girls are dreamers. You dream of what you are going to be—lawyers, doctors, preachers, merchants, farmers, engineers, teachers. When I see the boys and girls on their way to school I sometimes say to myself: "There are the dreamers; they are thinking of the future; they are seeking knowledge to prepare them for the future, and they are dreaming of what they are going to be." You should

all be dreamers. If you wish to succeed you must have dreams and you must have courage to dream.

Parents are dreamers. They have dreams of what they would like their children to be. I believe the mother of Moses had many dreams concerning his future as she nursed him in the palace of Pharaoh. Good parents always have bright dreams about the future of their children. Boys and girls, so live that you may make your parents' dreams come true.

## XXVI

### A BAD FATHER'S GOOD DAUGHTER

I WANT to tell you of Mary Slessor, who came from a very humble Scottish home, but as a missionary for Christ in Calabar performed a wonderful work among heathen cannibal tribes where missionaries had never previously lived. She opposed their wicked customs, such as offering of human sacrifices, murdering of twin babies, killing of wives by the chiefs, drunkenness, slavery, tribal and village wars, and many other revolting practices.

During her thirty-eight years' work she built scores of native churches and saw wonderful transformations brought about by the power of the Gospel. Her influence extended over 2000 square miles, and natives from near and far sought advice from the "good white ma." Many agencies which she commenced are now at work. Not only did the British Government appoint her a magistrate to preside over the native court, but as a recognition of the great work she had done for humanity in Nigeria, King George bestowed upon her the Order of

the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. In history, Mary Slessor will live as one of the great heroines of the mission field.

*I. Mary Slessor's Life and Work reminds us that God calls His Workers from very unlikely Places.*—As a girl she lived in a poverty-stricken home in a poor part of the city. Her father was a shoemaker, and though his income was not very large he spent most of it in strong drink. There were seven children, all of them delicate in health, and all of them except Mary died comparatively early. When her brother John died she was the eldest of the remaining six. Because of her father's excessive drinking the furniture was gradually sold to secure food for the family, Mary often being sent with articles to the pawn shop. When eleven years of age she had to go to work as a weaver in the factory, her mother teaching her the work. Mary had to rise at 5 a.m. and help in the house work until it was time for her to go to the factory, where she worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Who would have thought that from that poor home of a drunkard God would call that girl weaver to become one of His great missionaries.

God often knocks at the door of some humble cottage when He wants a great leader in His Church or in the world. When David Lloyd George was a little boy his father died, and he

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was brought up in the cottage home of his uncle, the village cobbler. In describing the home life of his early days he says, "We scarcely ate fresh meat, and I remember that our greatest luxury was half an egg for each child on a Sunday morning." When he stood as a candidate for Parliament his opponents said it would be a crime to send a man to Parliament who had been brought up in a cottage. It would have been a greater crime against the nation had he been kept out of Parliament merely because he was born in a cottage.

Sir James Duckworth, M.P., was a merchant prince of Lancashire, but as a boy he lived in a poor home. When six and a half years of age he went as a "half-timer" to work in the cotton factory, and at eleven years of age he became a "full-timer," leaving home at about 5.30 a.m. and returning about 7 p.m. He received fourteen shillings per week, and this assisted to support his widowed mother and three younger brothers and sisters. He often rose at 4 a.m., so that he might read and study for an hour and a half before he went to work. From that little, poor home God called him to be a worker for Him. He became a great leader of the Church, and was elected president of the United Free Methodist Conference. Because of his great public work, King Edward bestowed a knighthood upon

him. Who, looking at that little boy of seven, working as a half-timer, would have thought that he would become one of England's princely citizens and a great leader of the Church?

*II. Mary Slessor was a Good Daughter to a Bad Father.*—Not only did she do her part of the household work, but for fourteen years as a weaver she was the chief support of the home. As long as her father lived he drank hard and treated Mary harshly. He would come home on a Saturday night after spending a considerable portion of his money in drink, throw his supper into the fire, threaten to thrash Mary, and she had to run into the street for safety, and would have to remain there until he had gone to bed.

Mary and her mother hid their skeleton, and never spoke to people of the father's wicked conduct. They prayed that he might never publicly disgrace himself and his family. Bad as he was, Mary did her duty by him and did not make his conduct an excuse for failing to do her part. By her conduct she tried to draw him heavenward.

One of the Maori legends tells how a brother and sister who were twins were very fond of each other, and being always together were named "The Inseparables." Believing their scolding parents to be cruel to them, the twins one night left their home, weeping as they journeyed. At



last they leaped into the sky and became twin stars. The parents, finding their children gone, went out to look for them, but were unable to find them, but they happened to look into the sky and saw their children as twin stars. Father and mother leaped heavenwards to join their children, and all four are now bright stars, which the Maoris speak of as "The Inseparables."

Many of these Maori legends contain elements of truth, and surely this story tells us that children may lead their parents heavenward. A little child may lead its parents in the path of goodness. Godly children may save drunken parents. Sometimes, when children are taken to Heaven, their parents determine to follow them and begin to live holy lives.

In hiding her father's shame Mary Slessor acted in the spirit of the sons of Noah, who, when they found their father drunk, dropped a coverlet over him, so that others might not see him. They covered up their father's shame, and for thus doing their duty to their drunken father God richly blessed them. It may not always be easy to act the part of good children to bad parents, but it is none the less our duty to do so. To bear for years with a drunken father, to see him spend the money in liquor which is required for the home, to hear his language when drunk, and to have to suffer

through his conduct may be hard, but in spite of his wrong-doing the children are not excused from doing to their parents that which is right. Noah's son, Ham, went and told others of his father's shame, but Shem and Japheth hid it. It is more blessed work to cover up transgressions than to go abroad advertising the weaknesses and failings of other people, especially those of the members of our own household, whether they be husband or wife, father or children.

## XXVII

### THE SON WHO WAS PROUD OF HIS FATHER

“Honour thy father and thy mother : that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”—  
EXOD. XX. 12.

A YOUNG New Zealand soldier landed in England, and when he secured leave he visited his father's native village. He had often heard his father speak about the relatives and friends he had left behind when he came to New Zealand, and these the son felt he almost knew before he saw them.

What a welcome the village people gave him. One of his relatives took him from house to house, and the old folks spoke to him about his father, how he had worked in the church and in the cause of temperance, and what a fine Christian life he had lived before he left the village many years before.

As the son listened to the people speaking so highly of his father, he was delighted to know how greatly he was respected in his native village. He wrote a long letter home describing

the village. He repeated what the villagers had said about his father, and told of the kindness they had shown him because he was his father's son. In the letter he said : " I'm glad you are my father ; I have always loved you, but it made me feel proud of you when I heard the people speak in such high terms of your character and work." His father was pleased, not only because of what the people said, but because he had so lived that his son was proud of his being his father.

*I. A Father should be his Son's Ideal.*—To a small boy his father is a hero. He is the greatest and best man in the world. The boy is a hero-worshipper, and he puts his father on a pedestal and looks up to him. A Sunday school teacher asked one of his scholars who were the three greatest men he had either read about or known, and he replied : " Jesus Christ, King George, and my father." To that boy there was no greater man than his father. A small boy puts his whole trust in his father. What he does is right, what he says must be true, because father says it. Woe be to the father who lies to his son. Some time he will find it out, and then the idol will be shattered. Parents who lie to their children are the worst kind of criminals.

One day, as I walked down the street, I heard a mother, in a shrill voice, shout to her little

girl : " Come in this moment or I will skin you." The child took very little notice. I suppose the girl had heard her mother make similar lying threats before. Such parents do not make their children proud of them. Some time ago I read a sermon on " How to train up a parent in the way he should go." It is well that parents should be well trained. It would be good both for them and their boys.

A boy was asked by his teacher the following question in mental arithmetic : " Johnnie, suppose your father bought a suit of clothes for six pounds on January 1st and had to pay for them at the rate of two shillings per week, how much would he owe on December 31st ? " " Six pounds," replied Johnnie. " My boy," said the teacher, " I am afraid you do not know your arithmetic." " Yes I do, sir, but you do not know my father," was Johnnie's reply. He had formed a poor opinion of his father because he knew he did not pay for the things he bought.

We are every day writing upon the memories of those we meet. We cannot help writing. The soldier's father when a young man wrote upon the memories of his friends, and nearly forty years later his son found that the writing was still there. The people told him what his father had written. A man was in a poor street in the slums of a city, and he said to a boy, " Do

you love Jesus?" and in a defiant tone he replied, "No." A moment later, in a gentler tone, he said, "But I knows one of His agents, and I loves her." That woman had been quietly writing on the boy's heart.

*II. A Boy who has a Good Father ought to try and be a Good Son.*—It helps a boy to be good when he has a good father. When he is away from home the memory of his good father is a help to him. A public man, who is also a Methodist local preacher, said to me: "I have had a letter from my son, and he said, 'Father, when I was in Egypt I had many temptations, but when tempted your face always came up before me and I felt I could not yield to the temptations.'"

The memory of his good father helped him to overcome temptation. He would not do anything contrary to his father's character. He was like the son of the last king of France, Louis XVI. When his father had been put to death the little son was taken by some people, with whom he lived as a prisoner. One day they tried to make him do something which was very wicked, and he said, "I can't do it, for I am the son of a king." He felt he would be worthy of his father.

Every boy and girl may be the child of Heaven's King. Live as the son of a good

father ought to live. Never be ashamed of your father. A father who was a farmer in the country, and was somewhat unpolished in his manner and not very well educated, had a son to whom he gave a good education. The son went into the city, and in a few years secured a good position and moved in fashionable circles. One day his father went up to town to stay with his son, but he refused to introduce his father to his visiting friends, and kept him in the kitchen until they had left. The father felt his son was ashamed of him, and he returned home sad at heart. It was very wrong for the son so to treat his good father. If his son's friends would have laughed at his father they were not worth having as friends.

The Maoris have many beautiful and instructive proverbs, and one referring to children's treatment of their parents says: "If children cause their parents shame, it is sure to bring sorrow to themselves." That is quite in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. The Scriptures teach that God's blessing will rest upon those who honour their parents. Show love and affection for them.

Sir Thomas More was a great statesman and a Christian gentleman. He became Lord Chancellor of England when his father was only judge, but when Sir Thomas was on his way to Court

he always knelt before his father and asked his blessing. He knew he had a good father, and wished to acknowledge him before his friends. Sir Thomas More was a good father to his children, and they in return had great love and respect for him. When he was being taken to the Tower of London to be beheaded, his daughter broke through the guard of soldiers and threw her arms around his neck and kissed him. The scene made the soldiers weep. Her father's head was placed on a pole on London Bridge. One night she took it away, and was accused of stealing her father's head. She admitted she had done so, but was allowed to keep it. When she died it was placed in a coffin with her body. Truly she honoured her father.

Though boys and girls to-day may not be called upon to show their love for their parents in the face of danger, yet there are many ways in which you can show your respect for them. You may make them presents or make them happy and comfortable in their old age. When Joseph was Prime Minister of Egypt, and in power and honour was next to Pharaoh on his throne, he sent for Jacob, his old father, to come from the land of Canaan and live with him in Egypt. He sent him many presents for use, and he also sent Egyptian wagons to bring him and his family down to Egypt. If they had had motor cars he



would have sent the best he had for his father to ride in; or if there had been a railway, he would have sent a special train for him. What a meeting took place when Jacob and Joseph met.

Though Joseph was clothed in the costly robes of office, and his father was an old farmer from the country, he threw his arms around his father's neck and wept before the people for joy because he was able to see him once more. Though Joseph was next to Pharaoh in glory and power, he was not ashamed to own his father before the people of the palace, and he made him happy for the rest of his days. I think Jacob lived longer because of Joseph's kindness to him. Truly, "a wise son makes a glad father." Act a noble part to those who are nearest to you.

## XXVIII

### GREAT MEN SINGING THE PRAISES OF THEIR MOTHERS

“And caused a throne to be set for the king’s mother; and she sat on his right hand.”—1 KINGS ii. 19.

“His mother was his counsellor.”—2 CHRON. xxii. 3.

HUNDREDS of great men have united in declaring that the influence of their mothers has helped to make them great. Let us stand and in imagination watch a procession of great men pass by and listen to them as they sing the praises of their mothers.

*I. Preachers.*—Look at those men in the first rank in the procession. By their dress and the look upon their faces I am sure they are ministers. Yes, they are. That man speaking there is St Augustine. He was a great preacher and writer in the early Church and some of his writings have been handed down to us. Listen to his words: “My father died when I was seventeen years of age, and I ran into sin and lived the life of a prodigal, but all the time my sainted mother, Monica, prayed for me, and the memory of her life and prayers haunted me and made me

unhappy in my sins. The conflict in my soul became so great that one day I went into the garden, and under the leafy screen of a fig tree I prayed for salvation. Then I went home and read the Bible, and I was transformed into a new man. Later my mother died in my arms rejoicing that her faith and prayers had been answered. My mother was the means of my salvation."

Another great Bishop, Basil the Great, in passing, exclaims, "I, too, must sing the praises of my mother, who it was that taught my feet in the way of righteousness." With him is his brother Gregory, who was one of the greatest writers of the early Church. As he passes, he exclaims, "I, too, bear witness to my mother's influence." That other man near to St Augustine is the silver-tongued Chrysostom. He was one of the most eloquent preachers in the early Church, and was famed as an expounder of the Scriptures. Listen to his words: "It was my mother Anthus who taught me the golden words of Scripture and I am indebted to her for my training in goodness." That man next to him is Gregory of Nazianzen. Hark, he is speaking: "My mother, Nonna, devoted me to the Lord before I was born, and from her I first heard of Jesus and the saving power of His gospel."

So those fathers of the Church pass by, bearing witness to their mothers' influence.

*II. Statesmen.*—Many of the great rulers and leaders of the world bend their knees before the shrines of their mothers, and reverently sing their praises. Let us listen to the testimony of a few. Of course, all great men may not have mothers like those of ancient Sparta, who by stern methods taught them the lessons of patriotism and endurance. In the days of Alfred the Great there were no books, but in the quiet of the home his mother sang to him ballads and poems which told of the great deeds of former heroes. Alfred longed to imitate or even surpass the great deeds of these famous men. His life proved that she had not sung to him in vain. The seed she sowed bore fruit on the battlefield, or as in other ways he served his country. Listen to the words of some of our more modern statesmen as they pass in the second company of the procession.

Abraham Lincoln is the first to speak, and he exclaims: "The fundamental truths reported in the four Gospels as from the lips of my mother are settled and fixed moral precepts with me." President James A. Garfield's mother was left a widow when he was eighteen months old. She had four fatherless children to support. Like a heroine she worked on the "clearing," and as

years passed James helped her in the tilling of the soil.

So great was his love and admiration for his mother, that when he was made President he brought her up from her country home, and she sat on the platform during the inaugural gathering. As soon as the service was over he walked across the platform and kissed her wrinkled face in the presence of the great audience. That was his testimony to his mother's worth.

Napoleon tells us that when he was a boy his mother sang to him songs of war and conquests and roused within him a desire to fight and conquer, and he said, "I am what my mother made me."

Look at that old man of eighty years. He is the son of John Adams, one of the founders of the United States of America. His name is John Quincy Adams. He was a great lawyer, author, statesman, and was President of America and did much for the Abolition of Slavery. He was one of America's greatest men. Listen to his words as he passes in the procession: "All that is good in me I owe to my mother."

*III. Poets.*—No persons are louder in the praise of their mothers than are the poets. They were encouraged by them. Perhaps they first read their poems to their mothers. I think they did. Poets are sensitive and tender-

hearted, and I think they would naturally love their mothers. No man loved his mother's memory more than Cowper. She died when he was only six years old, and his tender, sensitive nature felt the loss of so good a mother. Fifty years later he received her portrait from his cousin, and he wrote one of the most exquisite poems, which he addressed to the picture. I advise the boys and girls to read the poem. Listen to some of the words of his song—

O that those lips had language. Life has passed  
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.  
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see  
The same that oft in childhood solaced me.  
Voice only fails.

Look at that bearded man in the poets' band. It is John Ruskin. Listen to his words, "As soon as I was able to read I studied the Bible by my mother's side, as few people were ever taught to study its pages." He thanks his mother for having trained him in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and laid the foundation of that beautiful style of writing which many admire.

George Herbert was one of the sweetest singers who ever sang Jehovah's praises. When four years of age he lost his father by death, and he was brought up by his sweet and dignified

mother, who was a woman of great wisdom and virtue. She assisted him in his studies of music, taught him the Scriptures, encouraged him in his work as preacher and poet, and sweetly does he sing the praises of his mother's character.

John Milton tells us of the grave Puritanic piety of his mother, and how she "disposed him towards a serious regard for religion as the chief concern in life." We know not how much we have to thank Milton's mother for his *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and his other religious poems.

Philip Doddridge, preacher and poet, said that his mother taught him the history of the Old and New Testament before he could read, and her wise and pious reflections upon the Bible stories made impressions upon his heart which never wore out. Isaac Watts, the great hymn writer, passes before us, and bears witness that his mother gave her sons rewards for writing verses, and thus started Isaac on his career as a hymn writer.

The poet Campbell tells us he derived his poetic tendency from his mother, who used to sing to him her favourite melodies, and from his cradle he became "skilled in sweet sounds." Crabbe states that the religious impressions he received from his devout mother influenced him in his writing.

The mother of Goethe, the German poet, was a delight to her children, because of her simple, hearty, joyous and affectionate nature, and was the favourite of poets and princes. A traveller who had a lengthy interview with her said: "Now do I understand how Goethe has become the man he is." She invented religious stories which she partly narrated to her children one night and finished them the next, allowing her children during the intervening day to imagine what would be the end of the story, and so developed the imagination of the young poet.

Boys and girls, like these great men, listen to the advice of your mothers.



## XXIX

### HOW THE THREE PRINCES SAVED THE PRINCESS

“Working together with Him.”—2 COR. vi. 1.

ONE day I read a story of an old Sultan who lived in an Eastern palace. He was a wise old ruler, with a long, flowing beard, and a very kindly look on his face. He had three sons, also a young lady (whom he had adopted) living with him in the palace. All the three young princes fell in love with the young princess, and each of them wanted her for his wife. They told their father the state of affairs.

When young men fall in love they do not usually tell their father. Perhaps it would sometimes be better if they did. Abraham sent Eliezer, his steward, to Padanaram to find a wife for his son Isaac, but that was a very exceptional case. Young men mostly find their own wives.

The Sultan advised his three sons to leave home for a year and a day, and the one who returned with the best present for the princess

should have her for his wife. They agreed to their father's suggestion. They travelled together for a day and decided to meet again in a year's time at the place where they parted, when they would compare their presents. When they met a year later one of the princes said, "I have a wonderful tube; I have only to put it to my eye and look through it, and I can see anything or anybody I wish to see."

"Well," said another of the princes, "that is a wonderful present, but see, I have a wonderful carpet," and he showed his two brothers a beautiful and costly carpet. "See," he said, "I have only to spread it out, then sit down upon it and wish myself anywhere, and I am there in a moment."

"Well," said the last of the three brothers, "your presents are wonderful, but look at this," and he took out of his pocket something which looked like a rosy-cheeked apple.

"If anyone is sick, all they have to do is to take a bite out of this apple and they are restored to health at once. Suppose," he said to his brother, "you look through your tube at the princess and see if she is well." The man with the tube did so, and his face turned very pale. "Oh," he said, "I have seen her, and she is in bed very sick and dying."

"If I were only there for her to have a bite

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of my fruit she would be healed at once," said the second brother.

"Let us all sit down on my carpet, and we shall be there in a moment," said the other brother. They did so, and the next minute they were in the young lady's room. She took a bite at the fruit and she recovered at once.

"Now," said the sons to their father, "who is to have the princess for his wife?"

"Well," said the father, "all your presents are most wonderful, and you each did your part in saving her life. If it had not been for the one who had the tube you would not have known she was sick, and except for the magic carpet of the other brother you would not have been in time to save her. If it had not been for the one with the healing fruit you could not have saved her when you got here. All your presents are equally wonderful, and you all did your part in saving her life. I shall have to wait another twelve months before I can decide which of you can have her for your wife."

Now, that is just a story, but there are some very good lessons for us to learn from it.

*I. We should be Willing to Join our Services with Others to bring a Blessing upon another Person.*—Go out into the public gardens and you will find by a little study that the sun, clouds, frost, and soil have united to produce the things

we admire or those which are useful. The vegetables of the garden are the result of the labours of persons in many countries. The potato, which is so very valuable a part of our food, did not grow in New Zealand until a few years ago. Many years ago potatoes were taken from America to England, and from there to other parts of Europe. For some years the people were not inclined to eat them, but since then they have been developed, and many kinds grown, so that our potatoes to-day are the result of the labours of many persons.

Someone brought the first pumpkins to this country. They did not grow here originally; they are natives of Asia, but after being transplanted to various countries they at last arrived in our New Zealand gardens. The history of our vegetables show that we are indebted for them to many men and different lands.

It is the same with the flowers. I walk among the roses, and I am impressed by their great variety. I soon discover that they have been brought from different parts of the world to grow side by side in the one rosary. I look round our public gardens and I see several kinds of fuchsia and I exclaim, "Why, dear me, what a long way those plants are from their original home in Peru and Mexico." Then I see the dahlia and I say, "Whoever would have

thought that the dahlia would have travelled across the sea from America and Europe to grow in a New Zealand garden ? ” “ Dear me, there is a beautiful geranium all the way from South Africa, and a lily of the valley from England.”

As I walk round the garden the flowers seem to smile at me and say, “ Men have united their labours and brought us together from many lands to give you pleasure.” The native cabbage trees, fern trees, and palms seem to have no objection to the immigrants from many lands.

While I am in the garden I look at the beautiful native birds and I listen to the song of those which have been brought all the way from Europe. The lark and the thrush as they sing remind me of Old England, but the sight of the native birds bring my thoughts back to New Zealand. Both the native and imported birds are necessary to complete my enjoyment in visiting the public gardens.

How did I get the suit I am wearing ? Think of the many persons required to produce it. First, there was the sheep farmer, who owned the farm on which grew the sheep that produced the wool. Then there was the shearer who shorn the sheep, the merchant who bought the wool and sent it to England, the ship that took it across the sea, the wharf men who placed the wool on the trains which conveyed it to the

Yorkshire woollen factory where the woollen cloth was made. It was brought to New Zealand, and finally made into a suit for me by a tailor. After this united work I am now wearing it.

The officers and teachers of the Sunday School all unite in their work, so that each scholar may be told of Jesus and trained in the way of righteousness. Years ago, many people gave donations to pay the cost of building the church, so that the Word of God might be preached and Christian character developed. Now, if so much has been done for us, we certainly ought to do something for someone else.

*II. These Three Princes saved the Life of the Princess as the Result of their United Gifts.*—Each did his part. You may have to do your part in life as an obscure part of a whole. You may never be chairman of a committee, but you may have to do work in some obscure capacity on the committee. You may not even be a member of the committee, but your little may contribute to the success of the whole. Stamp nobility on the humblest work.

Epaminondas was one of the greatest rulers of Thebes. He was a great soldier, and delivered his people from their enemies, but when he tried to teach the principles of right, justice, and humanity, his ideas were too pure and exalted for the people. When his term of authority

expired they refused to re-elect him, and only appointed him superintendent of the city scavengers, a position which at that time was low and despised. Nevertheless, he did his duty so thoroughly that he exalted the position of head scavenger, so that it was looked upon as one of great honour. The Governor by his conduct exalted the lowly position of street scavenger by the way in which he kept the streets clean. Wherever you are or whatever you have to do, "Act well your part. There all the honour lies."

## XXX

### THE COBBLER AND HIS WORK

As I walked past a cobbler's shop I saw a notice in the window, "Repairs neatly executed." A number of newly repaired boots and shoes were on view, which showed that the cobbler was proud of his finished work. As I looked at them I thought of the words I had learnt when a boy—

If I were a cobbler I'd make it my pride  
The best of all cobblers to be.  
If I were a tinker no tinker beside  
Should mend an old kettle like me.

Which means that every man should take a pleasure in his work and be proud of it when finished. If he is not, then there must be something wrong either with the work or material.

*I. Look at the Repairer.*—He is only a humble cobbler earning his daily bread by repairing boots and shoes, but we must remember that many distinguished men have come from the cobbler's bench. Mr Lloyd George was not a cobbler, but he was brought up by an uncle who was a repairer of boots and shoes, and the



future Premier of England was accustomed to sit in the cobbler's shop and listen to the wise advice of his uncle.

Some cobblers have become poets, such as Robert Bloomfield, who composed his famous poem, *The Farmer's Boy*, while working in a garret with six or seven other shoemakers, or John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet of America, who wrote many poems in favour of social reforms and philanthropic movements, or Thomas Olivers, the Methodist hymn writer, one of his finest hymns being the one beginning—

The God of Abram praise,  
Who reigns enthroned above,  
Ancient of everlasting days,  
And God of love.

Quite a number of other talented poets could be mentioned who first began to write their poems while working at the cobbler's bench. There have been cobbler preachers, men who have given up repairing boots so that they might save men. Samuel Bradburn was a famous Methodist minister who became president of the English Wesleyan Conference. George Fox was the founder of the Society of Friends, and they were both shoemakers before they were preachers. So was Thomas Shillitoe, a Quaker preacher who felt it his duty to preach to kings and

emperors, and remind them of their grave responsibility before God for the good government of their people. He succeeded in giving private exhortations to Kings George III. and George IV. of England, the King of Denmark, the King of Prussia and the Czar of Russia.

Yes, quite a host of cobblers have become preachers, and some of them have become distinguished missionaries. William Carey was repairing boots and shoes when he heard God's voice bidding him go to India, and what a wonderful work he accomplished as a missionary in that benighted land.

Robert Morrison was the pioneer of modern missions to China. He translated the Scriptures into Chinese, founded an Anglo-Chinese college, became a great Chinese scholar, and was one of the greatest missionaries who ever left England. He began life as a maker of wooden clogs and shoe lasts. Quite a number of cobblers have become famous as writers. Dr John Kitto as a boy spent some time in a workhouse, where he was taught to make shoes, and he afterwards became a shoemaker. After years of study he became known as one of the greatest writers of the day. Samuel Drew, the self-taught Cornishman, who became famed as a writer, for many years earned his daily bread as he sat on the cobbler's bench.

When John Pounds, the philanthropist, died, a tablet was erected to his memory, and on it were inscribed the words, "To the memory of John Pounds, who, while earning his livelihood by mending shoes, gratuitously educated, and, in part, clothed and fed some hundreds of poor children." By his work he inspired others, for Lord Shaftesbury said on one occasion, "I am a disciple of John Pounds." We could tell of Thomas Cooper, the Chartist leader and well-known author; of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, the British admiral, and other shoemakers who rose to distinction, but these examples show the young people that if they work hard they may rise to high positions, but remember that

Honour and shame from no condition rise,  
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

Most people are repairers of some kind, and we should never be ashamed of the lowliest work.

*II. Repairing is Noble and Helpful Work.*—When the cobbler takes the worn boot in his hand he looks it over to see how he can best make a good job of it, and when he has done the repairs he is proud of his work, and says, "That is a neat job, and that boot is almost as good as when it was new." Perhaps when he was repairing the boot he thought of humanity and the nation, and of the repairs required.

Repairing of some kind is going on every day.

Our legislators are repairers, and our Houses of Parliament are places where repairs are executed. Every new or amending bill is a piece of repairing work, and all the talk in Parliament is because the members have different opinions as to how the repairs should be done. The Conservatives want the repairs done one way. The Liberals think they should be done another way, and the Labour members maintain they should be done in a way different from that of either of the other parties, and so sometimes, because they can't agree how to do the repairs, often they are either not done or only partly done. Their repair work often shows some very ugly patches simply because the repairers are actuated by a selfish spirit. Party is placed before the State.

Hospitals are places where humanity is repaired. Doctors are repairers, and the nurses are their assistants. Sometimes we hear that a doctor is a very skilful surgeon, or that he is a specialist in treating some part of the human body, which means that his "repairs are neatly executed." It is a noble work to be employed in healing men, and is in harmony with the will of Christ, who healed men's bodies. He is still the great Physician who heals the souls of men.

Preachers are repairers, and in the name and strength of Christ they try to win men from sin to holiness. Men and women are saved by the power of the Gospel, and the calling of a preacher is a noble one. Churches are places where saints and sinners are repaired.

Repairing character is a Christ-like occupation. To lift up the fallen and to enable them to make a new attempt to live a good life, to reclaim the drunkard by persuading him to sign the pledge, or to close the liquor bars and remove temptation from the path of tempted humanity is splendid repair work. Boys and girls, be social repairers.

We hear a good deal about national repairs. Various names are used, such as reconstruction, rebuilding, and reparation, which means that attempts are being made to repair the damage done by war, but the best piece of repair work would be to kill militarism and put an end to war.

Let this be your work, boys and girls, to make the flowers of harmony and sweetness grow on the world's battlefields of discontent.

*III. Remember, there is mostly a Mark where the Repairs have been Done.*—Though the cobbler's work may be well done the repaired boot is not equal to a new one. Where possible, keep things unbroken, so that they do not need repairing.

Keep your friendships unbroken. When broken friendships are repaired there is often a memory of the break. I heard a person say, "I have forgiven him, but I have not forgotten him." It was easy to see the ugly patch where the repairs had taken place. Don't lose your temper and say nasty things to people, and then be sorry and have to go to them and express regret at your conduct. Be good tempered and keep your friendships whole. Don't live a bad life and then later have to patch it up, but from your early days live the Christian life. Let your life be without patches.

## XXXI

### THE MAN WHO OPPOSED PUBLIC OPINION

“We ought to obey God rather than men.”—ACTS v. 29.

You have read of Thomas Clarkson, who spent his life in labouring for the freedom of the slaves. He was one of God's great good men. I want you to look at him as a man who dared to oppose public opinion.

*I. Look at the Manner in which God called him to his Life's Work.*—When a young man in college at Cambridge, he entered for a university prize essay competition. The subject was, “Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?” When Clarkson entered for the competition he had only one desire, and that was to come out on top and win the prize. But as he knew scarcely anything about slavery he began to study the question. He gathered together a great mass of material, but he became filled with horror as he gradually discovered how awful and wicked was the slave trade.

A great passionate desire to help the suffering

slaves of Africa took possession of him. His essay won the prize, and after he had read it before the University he rode on horseback to London and arranged for it to be published. When read by the people it created a sensation.

He now had a great struggle in his mind. He had been trained with the intention of becoming a clergyman. He had prospects of success in the Church, and he knew his family would be greatly disappointed if he did not become a minister. Yet he felt he ought to devote the whole of his time in opposing the slave trade, and giving freedom to those that were bound.

He determined to consecrate his life to the great work of setting the slaves free. He might fail, but he would do his best and leave the rest with God. The evil he had to fight was a great one. In the eighteen years previous to the reading of his essay, 3,500,000 persons were forced from Africa and sold into slavery.

Thousands of people were enriching themselves through the traffic. Every class of people in England, from royalty downwards, was reaping benefit from the trade, and when Clarkson and his companions, Wilberforce, Grenville, and Sharpe, began their anti-slavery campaign, they were opposed by thousands of people who represented the public opinion of the day. Aristocrats, politicians, merchants, manufacturers, and



clergymen were largely dependent upon the slave trade for their income, and they opposed the anti-slavery agitators as though they were highway robbers.

Clarkson journeyed round England, securing evidence against slavery, and this he published at intervals. For years he was bitterly opposed. He was slandered, insulted, assaulted, and often his life was in danger. As time passed his anti-slavery meetings opened the eyes of the people, and three hundred thousand Englishmen refused to use sugar which had been grown as a result of slave labour. After more than twenty years of hard work, he had the joy of seeing the Bill for the abolition of the slave trade pass the House of Commons.

*II. It Requires Great Courage to Stand up against Public Opinion.*—A person requires deep convictions and a settled determination that he will not be moved from what he believes to be the path of righteousness. Feeling that he is right, he is prepared to take the consequences of his actions. The saviours of the world have been those who have dared to face the frown of public opinion and oppose the sentiment and custom of the age in which they lived.

The Roman Emperor Honorius gained a great victory over the Goths, and he celebrated it by a series of games, sports, and a gladiatorial

combat. The fight took place in a large amphitheatre which held about eighty thousand spectators. I have stood amid the ruins of the Colosseum in Rome and tried to imagine the wonderful sight of all those tiers of seats occupied by rulers, leading citizens, and refined and delicate women, who cheered and yelled as the contests took place. Some scores of men fought in the Emperor's gladiatorial contest; a number of them were killed. Then the two captains decided to fight until all the combatants were either killed or disabled.

Among the spectators there was a devout monk, named Telemachus, who had gone to see the butcheries for himself. He was filled with horror and indignation so that he leaped over the wall and stood between the champions and commanded them to stop fighting. He then appealed to the people to stop this awful practice which made them guilty in the sight of God. The people were furious because their sport was spoiled. They stoned the monk until he fell dead, and his body was carried away. The Prefect, deeply impressed by the murder of the monk, announced that the games were over, and the people went home and discussed the murder.

So deep was the impression made upon the Emperor that he issued a decree which declared that no more gladiatorial fights should ever

take place in the Roman Empire. Telemachus opposed public opinion and a popular custom, and though the public killed him yet he was victorious in his death. With the stones by which the people murdered the monk they also killed their own sport. His brave act and noble death changed public opinion, and his victory was greater than he knew.

*III. Do not be Afraid of Opposing an Evil because it is Ancient or supported by those in Authority.*—Be true to your conscience, and if a thing is wrong smite it, though kings and legislators may defend it. On one occasion a friend of Charles the Second voted against him, at which the King was greatly displeased. The next day, to please the King, he voted for him. “You were not against me to-day,” said Charles. “No,” his friend replied. “I voted against my conscience to-day.” He had not the courage to oppose the opinion of the King.

If an evil is so ancient that its locks are grey with age, and if it be supported by the sentiment of the time, do not be afraid to smite the evil thing. Do your duty and leave the rest with God.

New occasions teach new duties,  
Time makes ancient good uncouth ;  
They must upward, still, and onward,  
Who would keep abreast of Truth.

## XXXII

### THE MESSAGE IN THE SONG THE BIRDS SANG TO ME

“The singing of birds.”—SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 12.

EARLY one spring morning in New Zealand I heard a bird singing a sweet song. Soon another songster joined the first one and they sang a joyous duet. As I listened my memory went back to my early days, when, amid the beautiful scenery of Northern Derbyshire, I had listened to birds singing a similar song.

The song of the birds reminded me of the young man who was successful as a gold digger in Australia in the early days. He sent for his father and mother, who lived in England, to come and live with him, and to bring with them an English skylark. The morning after it arrived the young man placed it in a cage outside the house, and it began to sing its song. People gathered round to listen, and when Sunday came the gold diggers walked some miles to hear the bird sing a song which reminded them of home, sweet home. Besides being

reminded of Old England, I heard a message in the song of the birds. They seemed to say:—

*I. We are Using the Gifts God has given us.*—Other birds might have more beautiful plumage, but they could not sing as sweetly as the birds to which I listened. Like the birds, we should use our gifts. If you have a beautiful, sweet voice, use it and sing a song of hope to cheer other hearts. Or you may learn some good recitations, and recite the message you have in your memory. You may develop from reciters to public speakers. Do not be discouraged by your first efforts. You would laugh if you heard the funny noise the young cuckoo makes when it first tries to sing, yet how sweet are its notes when its voice is fully developed. The swift-flying bird has many falls when it first tries to use its wings, but it perseveres.

You are expected to develop your gifts. To do this you attend day school or college, or take music and singing lessons, or become apprentices to trades or professions. If you feel dissatisfied with your first efforts, take encouragement by remembering that some of the greatest orators could only stutter and stammer when they first began to speak in public, and that the first paintings of some great painters were poor pictures. When the great musicians first began to play they made many mistakes.

Another part of the birds' message was :

II. "*The Winter is Past and the Spring is Here.*"—It had been a hard winter, of severe frosts, and heavy snows, and now the birds seemed to say, "Cheer up, the worst is past and it is better on before. Sunshine and warm weather will soon be here, and the world is going to look beautiful." Young people, always remember that after winter comes spring. Hard winters do come to an end.

A farmer friend of mine has the following motto hanging in his dining-room: "Cheer up, the sun has not gone out of business," and in wet weather he gains comfort by reading the motto. Look on the bright side. If you do not like going to day school, do your best and remember that school days will be over in a few years, and that the knowledge you gain will be helpful to you all your life. If you have some disagreeable work to do, get it done as quickly as possible, and when doing it cheer yourself with the thought that the work will soon be done.

III. The third part of the message of the birds was: "*Trust in God and don't Worry.*"—How happy were those birds, yet probably they did not know where they would find their breakfast. They seemed to say to me, "God who has cared for us during the winter will surely

provide for us during the summer." Jesus taught us that from the birds we should learn to trust in God, and that He who marks the fall of each sparrow has numbered the hairs of our head. Though in some countries the sparrow is killed as a pest, yet not one falls to the ground without God's knowledge. He who cares for the sparrows cares much more for men and women.

IV. The last message in the birds' song was : "*Do not stop the Birds from Singing.*"—Simon Woodhead was asked if he heard the birds singing, and he said, "Yes, I heard their noise. They woke me up with their din, and I felt like taking my gun out and shooting 'em." He would have heard as much music in a boy playing a tin whistle as a great organist playing a pipe organ, and he would have derived more pleasure from listening to the braying of a donkey than to the sweet notes of a nightingale.

I heard of a man who went for a holiday in the country, and returned home to town in a few days. He gave, as a reason, that the nightingales, by their singing, kept him awake at night, and the larks, with their songs, woke him in the morning. He preferred the noise of the city. He was related to the man who covered the canary's cage with a cloth because "he did not like to hear its noise." Of such people it

may be said that having ears, they hear not, and they are poorer because they have no ear for music.

Never take music out of people's lives. Crabby, grumbling people are not only unhappy themselves, but they take the pleasure out of the lives of the people they live and work with. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* you read how the cruel slave-owner took the pleasure out of his slaves' lives by his brutal treatment of them. Though masters to-day cannot treat their employees like Uncle Tom's treated him, yet by their cross, overbearing manner they can take the pleasure out of the lives of those they employ. Ungrateful children take the music out of their parents' lives. Grumpy parents drive the music out of their homes. Tyrants take the music out of the lives of their subjects. Young people, try and put a sweet song into the lives of people. Be music-makers instead of music-killers.



## XXXIII

### THE REAL THING

“Be sincere.”—PHIL. i. 10.

ONE day I listened to several persons discussing the characters of a number of professing Christians. After the conversation had been continued for a little while, one man asked, “What do you think of Moses Mason?” One of the men replied, “He is a real white man; he is the real thing. If all Christians were like him it would be easy to believe there was something in religion.” That man wanted the real thing, and not a hypocrite or an insincere pretender. Now

*I. We usually Prefer the Real Thing to a Substitute.*—We prefer good fresh butter to margarine, sugar to saccharin, wheat bread to that made of maize, bran, and potatoes, and we prefer a fresh laid egg to one made in a laboratory. I would rather have good solid leather than leatherette. So in remedies and cures. One day I went to the chemist’s and asked for a medicine which was a cure for a certain sickness. “I am sorry I have not what you ask for,” said the chemist,

“but I have a remedy I have put up myself, and it is just as good as the other one.” I took it, but I found it was a poor substitute. It was not “just as good” as the real thing. Some people are like that with religion. They deceive themselves by substitutes, which they think are as good as the religion of Jesus, and they are disappointed. They think respectability, morality, having a good name and a surface appearance of being religious is just as good as having the converting grace of God in their hearts. They deceive themselves by thinking they have the real thing, when they have only substitutes.

Boys and girls who are the real thing will not pretend to be something they are not. They will be sincere, which means that they will be in reality what they are in appearance, honest in purpose and in intention, frank and straightforward. They will speak the truth and never attempt to deceive.

There are frauds everywhere—persons who appear to be something they are not. When I was a boy, a man said to me, “I want you to bring this small bag to me while I am talking to those three men,” to whom he pointed. I did as he wished, and from the bag he emptied into his hand what looked like golden sovereigns. I found out afterwards that they were only imitations. Ever so many of them could be

bought for a shilling. He wanted to make the men believe that he had plenty of money. Neither was the man nor were his imitation sovereigns the real thing. The conduct of the Germans before and during the War caused the other nations to distrust them. When the Germans, who had been sent to ask for an armistice, entered the presence of Marshal Foch, he asked, "Who are you, gentlemen?" He demanded their credentials in proof that they were not impostors, but real representatives. He did not mean to let them deceive him. He wanted the real thing.

*II. Be the Real Thing in your Friendship.*—I knew two boys who were friends for years, but one of them was one-sided in his friendship. He expected his companion to give way to him in everything. If there were sacrifices to make, he would not make them. He would take all the kindnesses his companion would show to him, but he did not return them. He would take, but he would not give. He was selfish, and the friendship was too one-sided to be permanent. It was destroyed by selfishness. Solomon says that he that hath friends must show himself friendly. He must be the real thing.

Be the real thing in your games. Some boys you cannot trust in their games. They are

always looking for a chance to cheat. They won't play fairly.

*Be the Real Thing in Business and Work.*—Don't cheat. Always go in for a square deal. A Yorkshire woman said to me, "I went to a shop to buy a piece of cloth with which to make a dress, and the shopkeeper showed me a piece, and he said, 'This is all wool, madam.' I got a sample of it and took it home to test it, for though I may be living in New Zealand, I lived in Yorkshire, where they made real woollen goods. I found there was a lot of cotton mixed with the wool. It was not the real thing, and I have not dealt any more with the man who tried to cheat me." By his trying to cheat he lost a good customer. Neither was the shopkeeper nor were his goods the real thing.

A working man told me that for many years he had repeated the following lines each morning before going to work—

"Now I wake me up to work,  
My daily tasks I must not shirk,  
If I should die before the night,  
I hope my work will be all right."

A man who enters on his work in that spirit will do his duty faithfully. There will be no need for his employer to watch if he is shirking.

*III. When you Profess to be a Christian, be a*

*Real One.*—David said, “O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusteth in Him.” The religion he had in his heart was the real thing, and he wanted other people to enjoy it. After a week-night service, an official of one of the churches in my Circuit had a walk and talk with me, and he said, “I have felt God has greatly blessed me this year in my soul and circumstances. I intend to give a good donation to the Home Mission Fund to help to send the Gospel to the Maoris and the back-block settlers, and another donation to the Foreign Mission Fund, to help to send the Gospel to the heathen. I would like them to enjoy the religion I have got.” As I listened to him, I felt sure that he had got “the real thing,” and he was saying, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” By becoming familiar with the real thing you will be able all the easier to detect the imitation. A bank manager was asked by a young clerk how he would be able to distinguish counterfeit notes from the good ones, and he said, “Get familiar with the good notes, and you recognise the bad ones at sight.” That is a good rule for life. Familiarity with the good will enable you to detect the bad when it approaches. If you live near to Christ, wickedness will not appeal to you, but you will shrink from it.

*IV. To be “the Real Thing” you must put*

*your Heart into what you are Doing.*—Men or women who only work for pay never do the best work. They rarely accomplish great things. Jesus spoke of the difference between a hireling and a true shepherd. One morning a little girl was walking along a street in London. She was on her way to day-school, and she carried in her hand a bouquet for her teacher. A poor little boy, leaning on crutches, said, "Please give me a flower." The girl's heart was touched, and she gave him a rose. Then four or five other children gathered around her, and each begged a flower. One by one she gave them away, until she had not one left for her teacher. Next day she carried a bouquet for her teacher and one for the children. She did this for some days, until she had to carry a basket of flowers for the poor children. Perhaps you think the work of the kind-hearted girl was not very much. Let me tell you. It was the beginning of the Flower Mission. The news of what the little girl was doing spread, and the idea was taken up all over London. Then the idea crossed to America, and now there are Flower Missions in the cities of England and America. Just because a little girl put her heart into giving a few flowers to poor children.

## XXXIV

### A SOLDIER OF TWO KINGS

“A devout soldier.”—ACTS x. 7.

BEFORE the Great World War many people looked upon soldiers as being men with not very good characters. Young men who got into serious trouble often ran away from home and enlisted. Thus the army was regarded as the place where prodigal sons, ne'er-do-wells, and blackguards found an occupation in harmony with their natures. If a man enlisted, the other members of the family felt they had been disgraced by the one who had become a soldier. The Great War changed our ideas concerning soldiers. Thousands of clean, manly young men from Sunday Schools and Churches—good Christian workers—became soldiers, and proved that a man could be a soldier and a Christian. Parents were proud to see their sons in khaki, though they hoped that the time would come when wars would cease to be.

*I. A Man can be a Soldier of King Jesus and King George at the same Time.*—During the War

the authorities often had to decide whether a man should be a soldier of the country in which he was born or the one in which he lived. He could not, for instance, be a soldier of King George and of the German Emperor at the same time. He had to belong either to England or Germany. It is possible for a soldier to wear the uniform of the King of England and of the King of Heaven at the same time. If a man is a soldier of King Jesus he may be all the better soldier of his earthly king. Soldiers of earthly kings have rendered good service to their heavenly King.

John Wesley found his best helpers and defenders among the soldiers. They introduced Methodism into various parts of Scotland and Ireland. It was Methodist soldiers who founded Methodism in the Channel Islands. The soldiers also rendered great help to the early Methodist missionaries in India.

In the Great War some of the leaders were good Christian men who felt compelled to defend their country. Lord Roberts was a good Christian man who privately and publicly acknowledged Jesus as his Saviour. In the last letter he wrote to Lord Curzon, and which was read in the House of Lords, he said, "We have had family prayers for fifty-five years. Attendance is quite optional, but as a rule all the servants,



men and women, come regularly on hearing the bell ring. Since the War began we usually read prayers, and when anything important has occurred I tell those present about it." Lord Roberts was a good Christian and a great soldier.

It is said that Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener were together when they received the news in 1914 that the Germans in a wonderful manner had been turned back at the Marne. Lord Roberts said, "Only God Almighty could have done this." Lord Kitchener replied, "Someone had been praying," showing that as soldiers they looked to God for help in their work.

There have often been fights between our soldiers and the tribesmen in the hills of India. On one occasion two of our officers were taken prisoner. They were offered their lives if they would disown Christ and accept the Mohammedan faith. They refused the terms and died as soldiers of England and of their King Jesus. Boys, I do not advise you to become soldiers. I hope we shall have no more wars, but I want to show you that it is possible to be a Christian and a soldier.

*II. A Good Soldier of King Jesus and of King George keeps his Record Clean.*—He does not live a loose life, nor is he guilty of breaches of

discipline. He is sober, and attends to the health of his body. He keeps himself fit to endure hardships when the testing time comes. His promotion is not hindered by any black marks against him. He is cheerful and is not a "grouser" or a pessimist. We don't now look upon a man as being a good soldier because he swears and drinks and has drunken brawls. War has become a science, and it requires sober men to be good soldiers. A good soldier of Jesus keeps his record clean. He has no black marks upon it. He promptly obeys the command of his King. He has a clean character, and he shows his loyalty to King Jesus by walking with Him clothed in the garment of holiness.

*III. A Good Soldier is Brave.*—For a soldier to be a coward and to run away in time of battle is for him to disgrace his uniform and the regiment to which he belongs. Bravery is the one virtue above all others we expect to find in a soldier.

Soldiers of Jesus must be brave, and there are many opportunities for them to show their courage and devotion. Frank T. Bullen tells how on board ship the crew were about to enjoy their Christmas dinner, when the boy who had brought in the food said, "If you please, may I say grace?" Some of the men bowed their heads, and the boy said, "O Lord, bless this

grub ; bless the skipper for thinking of us ; make us very thankful, and may we remember that this is Christ's birthday. We 'aven't thought much about Him—least, I 'aven't, Lord. Bless us all, Lord, for His sake." The men muttered "Amen" to the prayer of the brave little ship-boy. That was a brave thing for a boy to do.

*IV. A Good Soldier obeys and follows His Leader.*—He does not question or argue, but obeys. He trusts his leader. Boys and girls, as soldiers of Jesus, remember that your King is always with you in the fight. During the wars between the Spaniards and the French the former sent a note to the French commander, Coligny, saying, "Surrender. We are more numerous than you." Coligny wrote his reply on a piece of paper, fastened it to an arrow, and shot it into the Spanish camp. The message was, "Surrender never. We have a King with us." King Jesus is always with you, and if you look to Him He will always bring you off victorious.

*V. A Good Soldier of Jesus never gives up Fighting.*—When the Armistice was signed by Germany the newspapers came out with great big headlines : "The End of the War." The fighting was supposed to be over and it was expected the soldiers would soon be returning

home. They enlisted for the duration of the war and peace meant that the fighting was at an end. Also when men were permanently disabled they were discharged. They were out of the fight.

The warfare in which a soldier of Jesus is engaged never comes to an end. His enemy never gives up. He is never finally defeated. Young people, you will find if you wish to live a Christian life it will be a warfare to the end. You will never throw off your armour until the end of life. You have a splendid armour for your protection.

Read the last chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and you will find what a fine armour is provided for Christian soldiers.

All the soldiers of Jesus are volunteers. He has no conscripts in His army. Jesus never forces a man to be a soldier of His against his will.

No one can become a soldier in the military sense until he reaches a certain age, but persons of any age can be soldiers of Christ. You are never too young or too old to enlist in His army. He likes to have young soldiers. While a good soldier fights because he loves his country and believes in the cause for which he is fighting, he is also paid for his services. The soldiers who gathered in France went from many parts of the

Empire; they were paid for their services, and the rate of pay varied; soldiers from the Dominions receiving a higher rate of pay than those from England. The soldiers of Christ fight under His blood-red flags because they love Him, but He pays them well for their service. He gives them peace, joy, and happiness here, and Heaven for evermore.

## XXXV

### A BIG NO

"I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."—  
1 COR. viii. 13.

#### A GOOD RESOLUTION FOR THE NEW YEAR

LIFE is a battlefield, and all have to fight their own battles. Sometimes boys or girls win their greatest victory when they are able to say "No." It often requires much courage to be able to do so.

*I. There is the "No" that is half "Yes."*—Many people when they say "No," do so in such a tone that you feel they are neither determined, nor definitely decided in their own mind. Their "No" is half "Yes," and you have the impression that you only have to persuade them a little more and they will say "Yes." They are unstable and unreliable waverers. Now, when you feel it is wrong to do a certain thing, say "No," and say it in such a manner that no person will have any doubt what you mean. Know how to say "No."

The other day I heard of a boy who had been forbidden to go swimming. One day he returned

home with his hair wet. His mother said, "Do you not know that it was wrong to bathe when I had told you not to do so?" "Yes, mother," he replied, "I did wrong, but I was tempted." "But," asked his mother, "how did you happen to have your bathing suit with you?" "Well, I took it along, thinking I might be tempted." Now, that boy was not prepared to say "No" very determinedly. It would be a "No-yes," and he was prepared to say "Yes" when asked a second time.

*II. Sometimes to say "No" may mean losing Friends.*—Joseph said "No" when he was tempted, and as a consequence he had to suffer unjustly in an Egyptian prison. But the young man who was able to say "No" was afterwards Prime Minister of the Egyptian empire, and all the people sang his praises. There was conviction and character behind his "No." Though for a time you may offend your friends, yet in their hearts they respect you because they know you are right and believe you to be honest in your convictions. Some of your companions may turn from you when you say "No," and they may call you a "kill-joy" and a "stickler," but they will respect you for your principles, and the boy or girl who remains true to principle is sure to win through in the end.

*III. Sometimes you may have to say "No"*

*when it may be Dangerous for you to do so.*—The Hebrew youths in Babylon, of whom we read in the Book of Daniel, said, “No, we will not eat the king’s meat or drink the king’s wine. It has first been offered to idols, and we do not believe in idols.” “But,” said the keeper, “if you do not take this food, perhaps in a while you will not look as healthy as the other students, who do take it, and then I shall get into trouble.” “Well,” they said, “you just wait and see,” and at the end of the stated time they looked healthier than those who had taken the king’s food.

These young men did not only say “No” once, but they kept on saying it when they felt they ought to do so. A great idol was set up on the Plain of Dura, and when the music played all the people were to bow down and worship the idol, and if anyone refused to do so he was to be cast into a fiery furnace and so be burnt to death. The three Hebrews said, “We will not bow down to the idol god. We will serve the king faithfully, but we shall also be faithful to the God whom we worship.” The rulers heated the furnace seven times hotter than usual. It was so hot that it burnt to death the men who threw the Hebrews into the fire.

When they had thrown them in the rulers said, “That is the end of men who say ‘No’



in Babylon.” By and by the king looked into the furnace, and he saw the three men walking about in the furnace as though it was a lovely spring morning, and they were enjoying the singing of the birds, and the king said, “Why, there is a fourth with them, and he looks like the Son of God.”

They brought the men out of the furnace, and there was not even the smell of fire on their garments. Then did the king and the people bestow great honours upon them, and greatly did they admire these men because they had had the courage to say “No.” God was pleased with them because they said “No.”

Daniel was a man who could say “No” and stick to it. When the jealous rulers of Babylon said, “Now, you are not to pray for so many days,” Daniel said “No” to the law, and he prayed three times every day, as he had done before. They cast him into the lions’ den, but when they looked into the den the next day, expecting to see nothing but his bones, they saw him sitting calmly among the lions. He said, “The great Lord whom I serve and to whom I have been praying has closed the mouths of the lions.” Then was the king glad, and from that day he greatly loved and trusted Daniel. Again God showed He was pleased with the man who could say “No.”

*IV. Sometimes to say "No" means Loss of Worldly Prospects.*—Moses said "No." He was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. He lived at the Egyptian court, and he had won great honours. He was a great man, and it seemed as though one day he would be Pharaoh of Egypt, but he made a great decision. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter any longer, choosing rather to bear affliction with God's people, to join them and become their deliverer. Thus he threw aside all those great worldly prospects, probably including the loss of the crown of Egypt, but when 120 years of age he died on Mount Nebo, I do not believe he had any regrets because of the choice he had made.

Learn to say "No." Say it firmly, so that all may know that you have strong convictions and are determined to stand by them. Say "No" to wickedness in any form. Let this be your resolution.

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